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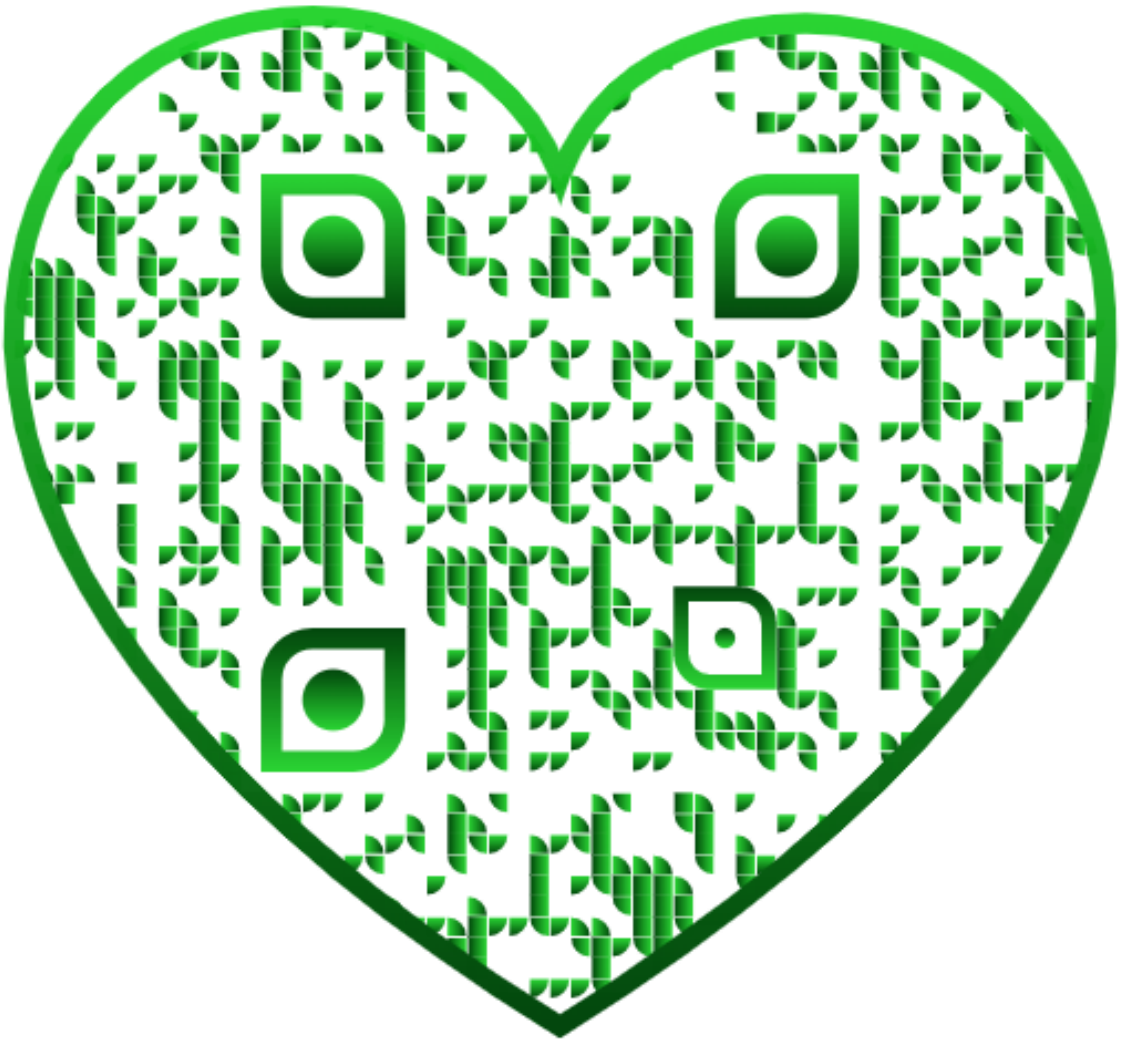

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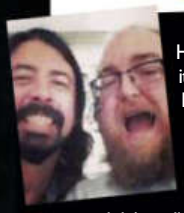

HELLO, READERS. When I were a lad, it were all mosh-pits around here, and I would spend the majority of my time in my friend's garage, bashing away at my Encore guitar, trying (and failing) to play songs of the day by Nirvana and Smashing Pumpkins. We were so young, we didn't really know what we were doing. We couldn't afford plectrums, so we'd cut them out of plastic milk cartons. I once tried to play a guitar solo with my teeth, the strings got trapped in the wires of my brace, and it ripped all the wiring out of my mouth. I really wish I'd had a copy of this issue way back when…

James
Editor

NEWS

ON THE COVER:

Holy Shit. **Download Festival** have announced *all three* headliners for next year's bash **(p4)**, plus we speak to with ex-Neck Deep guitarist **Lloyd Roberts** who's fighting to rebuild his life… **(p8)**

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ON THE COVER:

Avenged Sevenfold head up our celebration of six-string superstars in this **Guitar Heroes** special **(p18)**, featuring Tony Iommi, Slash, Jim Root and a whole host more. Elsewhere, **Asking Alexandria** let us rummage around their new album **(p36)**, **Mötley Crüe** sign off 30-plus years of debauchery with their final confessions **(p40)**, and there's **Skindred** with a rocket launcher **(p44)**!

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Frank Carter tells us why he nearly picked rabbits over snakes **(p56)**, while **Winterfylleth** give us a tour of Manchester **(p58)**.

5 SECONDS OF SUMMER p31

5SOS reveal their latest songwriting partner/tongue inspo, Marnie the dog!

SKINDRED p44

Moments later, we found out what happens when you wake up Benji Webbe on a Sunday…

COVER PHOTO: JUSTIN BORUCKI

NEWS

THE BIG STORY

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING EVER

"IT'S ABSOLUTELY THE END. AFTER THIS, IT'S OVER!"

OZZY OSBOURNE

DOWNLOAD

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHEN? 10 – 12 June, 2016

WHERE? Donington Park, Midlands, UK

WHO? Rammstein, Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden and loads more to follow!

WHERE TO GET SORTED? Weekend camping and day tickets go on sale this Friday at 9am from Downloadfestival.co.uk

MORE INFO? Head over to Kerrang.com for all your Download news and plenty more announcements!

Ozzy Osbourne: the original and the best when it comes to invisible oranges

MEET THE HEADLINERS!

HOLY GUACAMOLE, BATMAN! **DOWNLOAD** HAVE JUST UNVEILED THREE MONSTER HEADLINERS FOR NEXT YEAR AND WE'RE ON THE VERGE OF BURSTING WITH EXCITEMENT. SO MUCH SO, WE HAD TO FIND OUT WHAT LIES IN STORE...

SATURDAY

BLACK SABBATH

OZZY OSBOURNE TELLS K! THIS IS IT. THE METAL GODFATHERS ARE NOT CALLING IT 'THE END' FOR NO REASON...

HELLO, OZZY! SO, IS THIS REALLY THE END OF SABBATH? IT'S BEEN SAID BEFORE...

"This is definitely our last run as Black Sabbath. After this, it's *over*. It's absolutely the end. I mean, I'm gonna continue with my solo career when it's time to do something, but Sabbath is absolutely over now. It's a very special thing for me, Black Sabbath, but it's run its course and I've got no complaints. We started doing this in 1968 and look at how it still holds up today, which is amazing enough in itself."

AND YOU'RE NO STRANGER TO DONINGTON. IT MUST ALWAYS BE EXCITING TO RETURN TO THE HOME OF ROCK?

"Well, for me personally... the old Castle Donington holds a lot of great memories. I've had some great times and great gigs there over the years, as well as seen some great artists perform. The one I always remember was AC/DC, Van Halen, me, and a bunch of other bands [Monsters Of Rock 1984]. It was just one of those magical days where it all worked out for everyone, ya know? And the last time I played Donington was with Sabbath, just a couple of years ago [2012]. I remember it had been pissing down with rain for a week. It was a fuckin' marsh, a total fuckin' swamp. Then it stopped raining and we just got in there in the nick of time (*laughs*)."

HAVE YOU HAD ANY THOUGHTS ON THE SET LIST?

"We have been thinking about it. I've been corresponding with Tony [Iommi, guitar], and Geezer [Butler, bass] only lives up the road. We're gonna do the classic Sabbath stuff, so a *lot* of old songs. Because – to be honest with you – when we try out new ones, people don't wanna fuckin' hear it. They want the classics, ya know? But saying that, the last album [2013's 13] was such a big surprise for us. You know that was my first-ever Number One in America. *Ever*. With or without Sabbath, I'd never had a Number One over there. So, it only took 45 fuckin' years, but we got there in the end. The album was called 13 and it was Number One in 13 different countries, ya know?! It was like WOO-EEE-YYY [makes Twilight Zone noise]!"

SO, WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BLACK SABBATH SONG TO PERFORM LIVE?

"There are so many. I mean, we've got Iron Man, Paranoid, War Pigs... there's a load of them. I don't have a favourite. Anything off [1980's] Heaven And Hell probably ain't my cuppa tea! The one I always *have* to play – with or without Sabbath – is Paranoid. It's like my calling card. But to me, they're all good to play. My sister was showing me something on the computer this morning, they're now putting War Pigs on fuckin' kids' cartoons. I was like, 'WHAAAAAAAAAAAT?!' We're well into our 60s now, so all the people that were kids when we started now have fuckin' grandkids. It's like we've replaced Frank Sinatra!"

IT MUST BE HARD KEEPING YOUR PLANS SECRET WHEN THE ENTIRE WORLD IS DYING TO KNOW ABOUT WHAT KIND OF STAGE PRODUCTION YOU'LL BE HAVING...

"Well, the thing is... with all this social media stuff, people film the first show and then everyone knows what to expect. Which is kinda sad in a way, it's like there are no surprises any more. As soon as you play your first show, it's online and the fucking world knows your set within five minutes!"

FINALLY, PLEASE GIVE US SOME GOOD NEWS... IS TONY STILL CANCER-FREE?

"Tony's doing great! We text each other all the time and he's really looking forward to doing the tour. Let's keep our fingers crossed... because without him, we've got no more riffs."

PHOTOS: GETTY WORDS: AMIT BHARMA

THE BIG STORY

Bruce really wasn't that keen on the no swearing rule…

SUNDAY

IRON MAIDEN

BRUCE DICKINSON PROMISES US MAIDEN'S SET WILL BE NOTHING SHORT OF EPIC!

SO, IRON MAIDEN ARE BACK HEADLINING DOWNLOAD, AND THIS WILL BE YOUR FIRST UK SHOW SINCE THE RELEASE OF THE BOOK OF SOULS. YOU MUST BE LOOKING FORWARD TO BRINGING THOSE NEW TRACKS TO LIFE FOR THE FIRST TIME?

"We're really, really excited about playing some new music at Download. The last time we headlined Donington was back in 2013 during the Maiden England tour, which was the final phase of our 1980s History Tours, so it'll be great to come back in 2016 with a completely different, brand-new experience for all the Maiden fans."

WHICH NEW SONG ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO PLAYING AND WHY? WHAT ARE THE CHANCES WE'LL GET TO SEE EMPIRE OF THE CLOUDS LIVE?!

"We won't be finalising the set list until we start rehearsing early next year… But I think it's going to be really tough deciding which songs to include from the new album. As much as I personally would love to perform Empire Of The Clouds, I'm not sure there'd be enough room for the grand piano and orchestra… even on a stage as large as the Download Main Stage, so I think it's safe to assume we won't be including that one just yet (*laughs*)!"

ARE THERE ANY MAIDEN CLASSICS THAT YOU, PERSONALLY, ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO WELCOMING BACK AFTER A LONG ABSENCE, LIKE YOU DID WITH AFRAID TO SHOOT STRANGERS?

"Whenever we play songs we've not done live in a while, they're always well-received by our fans, so I definitely enjoy singing them for that reason. We spend a lot of time working out our set lists, trying to get a good balance of songs depending on the theme of the tour – whether it's a new album tour, or a History one, and taking into consideration that a lot of our fans are very young and may have never seen us live before, so every song is effectively 'new' for them. At Download, although the focus will be on The Book Of Souls, we are certainly planning on including some older songs we've not done live for a few years. And, of course, we'll be playing fan-favourites, too, as they always go down well, especially at a festival. I can't say any more than that right now!"

LAST TIME YOU PLAYED, YOU HAD A SPITFIRE PERFORM A FLYOVER BEFORE YOU TOOK TO THE STAGE. ANY IDEA ON HOW YOU'RE GOING TO TOP THAT?

"Well, I'll be landing Ed Force One, our double-decker [Boeing] 747 jet, with all the band, crew and stage equipment right next to the site at East Midlands Airport! I think that's pretty cool, isn't it?!"

LET'S ALSO TALK EDDIE: HOW ARE YOU GOING TO BRING THE NEW MAYAN INCARNATION OF HIM TO LIFE? WHAT KIND OF VOODOO MAGIC CAN WE EXPECT AND HOW WILL HE DIFFER TO GENERAL CUSTER/TROOPER/MUMMY/ALL THE OTHER EDDIES?

"We're still working on our stage production, so I can't reveal anything just yet… except to tell you that it really won't disappoint! The artwork on the album offers so many possibilities for us. I think The Book Of Souls Eddie is truly the most menacing Eddie we've ever had, so we are looking forward to having a *great* deal of fun with him in the live show!"

DOWNLOAD'S OTHER HEADLINERS ARE BLACK SABBATH AND RAMMSTEIN, BOTH KNOWN FOR PUTTING ON BIG SETS. DO YOU FEEL A SENSE OF COMPETITION WITH THEM TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE LEAVES SAYING, 'MAIDEN'S SET WAS THE BEST'?

"Yes, both those bands are fantastic and always put on amazing shows. Each of us has our own distinctive styles, though, and offer different things to a festival crowd. As Maiden will be closing Download this time, we are certainly aiming to send everyone home feeling that their encounter with Maiden and Eddie has been very… how can I put this… HEARTFELT!"

"All together now… 'Reach! For the staaars!'"

FRIDAY

RAMMSTEIN

THEY'RE COMING! EXPECT LOTS OF FIRE, BECAUSE… RAMMSTEIN ARE RAMMSTEIN!

ALRIGHT, TILL LINDEMÄNN! WHAT'S THE FEELING IN THE BAND RIGHT NOW, CREATIVELY SPEAKING, AFTER TAKING A WHILE OFF? DOES IT FEEL GOOD TO BE GETTING BACK INTO GEAR?

"All is good in camp Rammstein. We are always in gear… [because] Rammstein is Rammstein."

AIN'T THAT NICE TO HEAR! YOUR PREVIOUS DOWNLOAD STAGE SHOW WAS LEGENDARY. HAVE YOU FIGURED OUT HOW TO MAKE THE MOST INTENSE LIVE SHOW ON EARTH EVEN MORE… WELL, INTENSE?

"You will have to judge for yourself. Rammstein is Rammstein."

WE SEE WHAT YOU DID THERE! SO, IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'VE NOT DONE YET ONSTAGE PRODUCTION-WISE – FOR EITHER HEALTH-AND-SAFETY REASONS OR EXORBITANT COST – THAT YOU'RE DYING TO TRY OUT?

"We try everything. Rammstein is Rammstein."

MAKES SENSE TO US, MATE! AND CAN WE EXPECT TO HEAR NEW MATERIAL AT YOUR DOWNLOAD HEADLINE SET?

"No. Rammstein is Rammstein."

FAIR ENOUGH, INDEED! YOU'LL BE HEADLINING ALONGSIDE BLACK SABBATH AND IRON MAIDEN – TWO BANDS WHO ALSO KNOW HOW TO PUT ON A MASSIVE SHOW. DO YOU THINK YOU'LL FEEL A SENSE OF COMPETITION WITH THEM IN TERMS OF PUTTING ON THE WEEKEND'S MOST DEFINING SET?

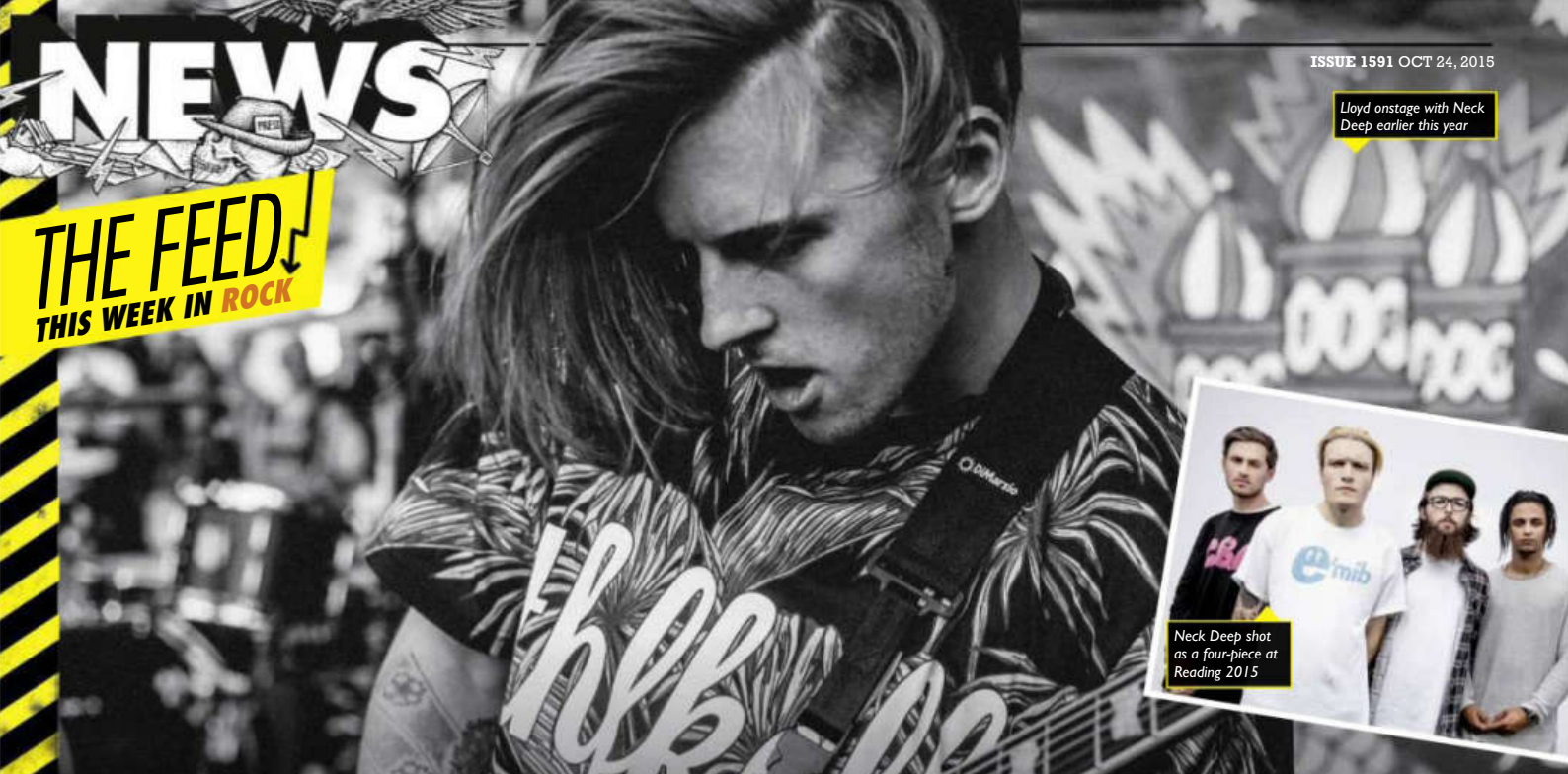
"No. Rammstein is Rammstein."

AND ONE LAST THING, WE'RE ALL DYING TO KNOW… HAVE YOU FIGURED OUT HOW YOU'RE GOING TO TORTURE [KEYBOARD PLAYER] FLAKE NEXT?

"No. Rammstein is Rammstein."

Stay tuned to Kerrang.com for more Download announcements!

THE FEED
THIS WEEK IN ROCK



Lloyd onstage with Neck Deep earlier this year

Neck Deep shot as a four-piece at Reading 2015

LLOYD ROBERTS: MY STORY

EX-NECK DEEP GUITARIST LLOYD ROBERTS CLEARS HIS NAME

ONLY A WEEK BEFORE they were due to smash the main stages of Reading & Leeds 2015, Neck Deep guitarist Lloyd Roberts stepped down from the band after allegations arose of misconduct with a fan. The band powered on – assuring fans that all scheduled shows would go ahead, despite being one man down.

Now, almost two months later, the guitarist has confirmed that he went to the police in order to clear his name. The investigation has been concluded, with officers finding no case for him to answer to.

"I'm very relieved to have this situation over and done with," says Lloyd. "I mean, as you can imagine, it was an extremely hard time for myself and my family. And I'm pleased that now I can start to look forward again, after such a difficult time. I knew that [involving the police] would be the best way to approach the situation and clear my name. I wanted to be proactive, to confront the claims head-on, rather than shying away from them. And I'm glad I've been proved correct in that respect."

WORDS: AMIT SHARMA

Understandably, it's been a complicated time for the guitarist, who had just become a father and was trying to focus on his family life when the allegations surfaced. After stepping down from the band he founded with singer Ben Barlow back in 2012, Lloyd

"IT'S LIKE MY LIFE WAS PUT ON HOLD FOR TWO MONTHS"
LLOYD ROBERTS

was instructed not to comment while the investigation was ongoing, and was forced to keep a low profile.

"The stress that it has caused, not just for me, but for all the loved ones around me, was hard to deal with," says Lloyd. "Having to keep quiet while waiting for the police investigation to conclude was incredibly frustrating. It's felt like my life has been put on hold for two long months."

Now that chapter has closed, Lloyd is keen to move on and get back to where he belongs. But he remains tight-lipped about the road ahead.

"At the moment, I'm playing my cards close to my chest," he says. "But let's just say that songwriting has always been my main passion, so I'll be pursuing that alongside a few other very exciting opportunities. I really can't wait to get started."

And what are the chances of being reunited with his old bandmates in Neck Deep?

"Look, who knows what the future holds. Right now, though, I'm just looking to move on with my life and start rebuilding…"

Stay tuned to Kerrang.com to find out what Lloyd gets up to next

SLAVES SHORTLISTED FOR MERCURY PRIZE

Congratulations to Kent punk duo **Slaves**, who have made the shortlist for this year's Mercury Prize, alongside **Wolf Alice**, **Aphex Twin** and… um, Florence And The Machine. Clearly the lads are on a bit of a roll after collecting **The Spirit Of Punk** gong earlier in the year at our very own **Relentless Kerrang! Awards**.

KINGS AMONG MEN

Head over to Kerrang.com for an exclusive listen of **Tyler Carter** from **Issues** and **Luke Holland** from **The Word Alive** pairing up for a cover of Years & Years' King. The duo had already tackled Paramore hit Ain't It Fun – to very high praise, indeed – on last year's Punk Goes Pop 6 compilation.

KERRANG!

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ROCK GOSSIP AND GIBBERISH

So that's why Pete was late for Wembley

Nobody puts hoodie in the corner...

We're still trying to figure out what Pete drew, too...

Pete couldn't believe it when HR said he wasn't getting paid overtime...

£ALL OUT BUY!

PHOTOS: IAN COLLINS WORDS: AMIT SHARMA

ROLL UP! ROLL UP! It's not every day you see Pete Wentz behind the till, but having recently seen the man in action, we are thrilled to confirm there's definitely some retail talent lost inside that rockstar charm. With FOB headlining two nights at Wembley (read our review on p46), he visited the band's pop-up shop in Camden, London, on October 11 to ensure things were ticking along nicely...

"This is so cool," grins Pete. "It's like we live in a world where there's no physical stuff, you know? Plus there's a democracy to this kinda interaction, because if you pay for meet-and-greets, then you get it. But with this place, you just gotta get up earlier! You can make it happen, it's sheer willpower on a level playing field!"

And do tell us, Pete – what retail experience do you have on your CV?

"I worked at the concession stand in my local pool during summer, selling nacho cheese. But I wasn't very good. Let's just say I *wouldn't* hire myself. But we used to sell our own merch back in the day and that showed me to hustle a bit..."

TRUMP IS A CHUMP

Well, at least according to Steven Tyler, who – despite being a registered Republican – has issued a cease-and-desist letter preventing U.S. Presidential candidate Donald Trump from using Aerosmith hit Dream On at his campaign events. As the Toxic Twin would say himself: don't get mad, get even!

Since when did Jack Nicholson play in blink?

WHAT'S MY RAGE AGAIN?

Mark, **Tom** and **Travis** running nude through the sunny streets of Los Angeles in the **blink-182** video for 'What's My Age Again?' could be one of pop-punk's most defining moments. And now – thanks to modern technology – the video has been reimagined using the psychotic ASBO delinquents of Grand Theft Auto V. It's cool and everything, but maybe someone had just a little too much time on their hands...

SPOTTED

Northlane were forced to stop their set in Southampton after at least one audience member was manhandled by an overly aggressive security guard. "We won't stand for this shit and I won't let it pass," said guitarist Josh Smith before the band tweeted to confirm the individual "has been fired". Elsewhere, in Pennsylvania, **Five Finger Death Punch** singer Ivan Moody led a chant of "Fuck **Kanye West**". Yeezy has yet to comment, but something tells us he's not going to be losing any sleep over this...

PANDORA BY RAY ZELL Rayzell.com

PANDORA, DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU SAD WHEN YOU THINK OF ALL THE AMAZING GUITARISTS WHO AREN'T WITH US ANYMORE.
NOT REALLY, WEB...
...'COS THEY'RE ALWAYS ALIVE IN MY HEAD.
JEFF HANNEMAN, JOHNNY RAMONE, KURT COBAIN, DIMEBAG DARRELL...
YOU HEAR THEM?
YEAH.
AT FULL VOLUME...
"...ALL PLAYIN' AT THE SAME TIME."
"BUT, PANDORA..."
"...THAT MUST BE INSANE!!!"
"NO, WEB..."
...IT'S BEAUTIFUL.

An evening with

MACHINE HEAD

MARCH 2016

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THU	3	NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
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SUN	6	DUBLIN OLYMPIA
TUE	8	MANCHESTER ACADEMY
THU	10	CARDIFF GREAT HALL
FRI	11	LONDON EVENTIM APOLLO
SAT	12	GLASGOW O_2 ACADEMY

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THE OFFICIAL KERRANG! ROCK CHART

THERE'S BEEN ANOTHER SHAKE-UP THIS WEEK, WITH NEW ENTRIES FROM **CROSSFAITH**, **COLDRAIN** AND **GHOST TOWN**. WHILE **BMTH** STILL HOLD ON TO THEIR THRONE…

	WEEKS ON CHART	HIGHEST POSITION	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	11	1	BMTH	Throne	SONY MUSIC
2	7	2	ALL TIME LOW	Runaways	HOPELESS
3	3	2	STATE CHAMPS	All You Are Is History	PURE NOISE
4	11	2	PVRIS	Fire	RISE
5	3	5	SIMPLE PLAN	Boom	ATLANTIC
6	10	2	NECK DEEP	Gold Steps	HOPELESS
7	5	5	EAGLES OF DEATH METAL	Complexity	UNIVERSAL MUSIC
8	2	8	LOWER THAN ATLANTIS	Get Over It	SONY
9	1	9	COLDRAIN	Gone	HOPELESS
10	5	8	COHEED AND CAMBRIA	You Got Spirit, Kid	EVERYTHING EVIL
11	11	5	WE CAME AS ROMANS	The World I Used To Know	SPINEFARM RECORDS
12	1	12	GHOST TOWN	Spark	FUELED BY RAMEN
13	2	12	SET IT OFF	Forever Stuck In Our Youth	EQUAL VISION
14	14	3	BFMV	You Want A Battle? (Here's A War)	RCA
15	6	12	CREEPER	The Honeymoon Suite	ROADRUNNER
16	4	16	FOR TODAY	Broken Lens	NUCLEAR BLAST
17	12	8	PANIC! AT THE DISCO	Hallelujah	FUELED BY RAMEN
18	1	8	CROSSFAITH	Devil's Party	UNFD
19	7	16	TRIVIUM	Silence In The Snow	ROADRUNNER
20	5	10	ONLY RIVALS	Replace//Exchange	SO RECORDINGS

ALEX GASKARTH, ALL TIME LOW

WHAT IS RUNAWAYS ABOUT, THEN, ALEX?
"It's based on a conversation I remember having with a girl I liked when I was 18. I had a car, and for the first time I felt like we could get away from all the bullshit we didn't like – feeling like we were bigger than the world."

DID YOU ALWAYS KNOW IT WOULD BE A SINGLE?
"It definitely had something to it. Once we started laying it down, we all had a moment where we knew it was going to be really great live. You do kind of know when a song is going to be a great connector."

WAS IT A TRACK THAT CAME TOGETHER EASILY IN THE STUDIO?
"At one point we started to overthink it, before coming back to the conclusion that the simplest version was the best. We thought about bringing a sax player and some other fun things in, but the way we demoed it was the right way!"

DEREK DiSCANIO, STATE CHAMPS

IS THERE ANYTHING ABOUT THE SONG THAT FANS WOULDN'T KNOW?
"A lot of people think it's a break-up song, but it's not. Well, it kind of is – but it's not about a girl. It's a grudge song about when I had a falling out with a best friend a year ago."

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE LYRIC?
"'*I think I know my limits, and how to make good decisions*'. It's about someone that is dragging you down."

ANY FOND MEMORIES YOU HAVE OF THE TRACK?
"I'll never forget the super-long nights of hard work throughout the recording process!"

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ISSUE 1591 OCTOBER 24, 2015

L – R: Alex Dench (bass), Charlie Wilson (guitar), Thom Debaere (vocals), Bobby Daniels (guitar) and Lasselle Lewis (drums)

COUNTING DAYS

MEET THE LONDON METALCORE FIVESOME WHO JUST REFUSE TO GIVE UP...

WORDS: TOMAS DOYLE PHOTO: GEORGE FAIRBAIRN

PACKING UP AND HEADING OFF TO THE CIRCUS, LADS?

Not quite. That's Counting Days, a band more prone to clobbering you over the head with riffs than juggling flaming knives. "When we started this band we were absolutely uninterested in doing what was cool or fashionable," explains frontman Thom Debaere, clutching his case. "We've just written a full-on, guts-out metal album that doesn't pull any punches, and called it Liberated Sounds because it's about the five of us expressing ourselves with no limitations whatsoever."

WAIT, DON'T I RECOGNISE THIS LOT?

You might well do, because Counting Days are chums with more pedigree than a can of delicious dog food. Thom once plied his trade in 5K-rated hardcore heroes Heights, while the rest of the band have stormed the stage as part of heavyweight bruisers TRC and Last Witness. "I basically had being in Heights taken away from me," offers Thom. "I got home from a tour and the next thing I was out of the van and not in the band. I'd known those guys since Year 10 at school, and it took me a long time to get over that. I sat at home and gave up on the idea of making music seriously. Eventually, I started speaking to Charlie [Wilson, guitar] and got lured back in by the sheer quality of what he was writing."

> **"WE SING ABOUT DEATH AND WAR"**

THEY DO SAY THAT VICTORY TASTES EVEN SWEETER SECOND TIME AROUND...

If that's the case, then this lot are chomping sugar-dipped ice cream right now. Having only been a band for 18 months, they've already recorded an album with legendary producer Fredrik Nordström (Bring Me The Horizon, Architects, I Killed The Prom Queen). "Tomas Lindberg from At The Gates is even on our album! He's a genuine metal legend!" beams Thom. "Admittedly I was doing the hoovering when he turned up to the studio, which isn't very metal – but it was all still mind-blowingly cool. But the best thing is that the guys in this band have become my best friends – we've bonded over our love of wrestling and played a *lot* of FIFA together!"

SO, CAN WE EXPECT SONGS ABOUT STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN IN THE FUTURE THEN?

Er... maybe? "A lot of the songs on the album are about bigger concepts in life, which is new for me as a lyricist," explains Thom. "Death, war, religion – all that stuff is in there. We want to push ourselves and be as expansive as we can in all ways, and I really feel like the ball is only just starting to get rolling for us." No songs about Austin, then, but one thing's for sure – Counting Days are stone cold stunners.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

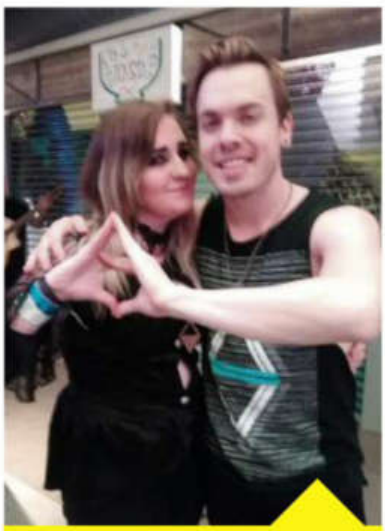
FOR FANS OF: Slipknot, While She Sleeps and Heights.
HEAR: Their riffstorm of a new album, Liberated Sounds.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/CountingDaysUK
CHECK OUT: The ferocious video for Die Alone on YouTube.
DON'T MISS: Counting Days and more killer new bands on Alex Baker's Fresh Blood show on Wednesdays at 10pm on K! Radio.

K!OMMUNITY

IT'S YOUR PAGE, YOUR LIFE!

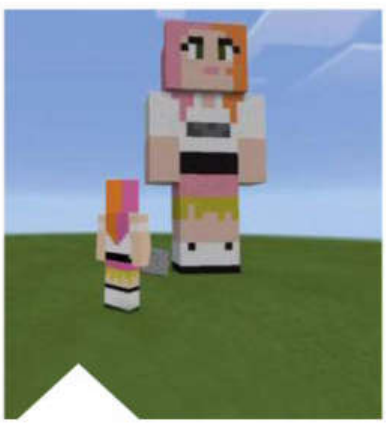
ALL TIME BRO

"I MET JACK BARAKAT!!!" says a very smiley ***@panicwithdallon****, with the equally happy All Time Low guitarist. Good thing the flash was on for these two Kids In The Dark! Sorry, that was lame…*



SELFIE IT OFF

"I was a lucky one to have a songwriting session with Cody from Set It Off in Cardiff," says ***@LBirt1993****. We're not sure about Cody's songwriting technique here, to be quite honest with you. But, whatever. He's the expert, not us.*



BRAND NEW (SQUARE) EYES

"A giant Hayley Williams and my character Hayley Williams on Minecraft," says ***@coverdrivegirlx****. This is genius! Would you mind logging in for a minute and putting your character to work on a new Paramore album, please? We'd really appreciate it. Ta.*

WINNER!

JUST ONESIE YESTERDAY

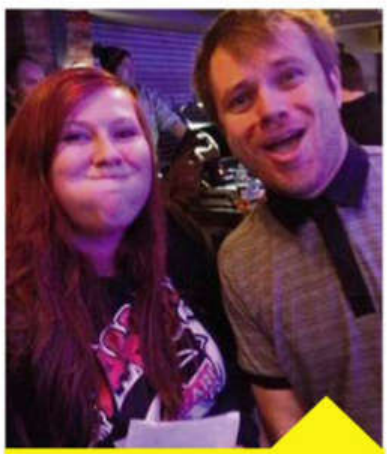
Here's ***@tablets1997*** *getting growly during a meet-and-greet with Fall Out Boy before their Cardiff show the other week! This ain't a zoo, it's a god damn arm's race, Liam. Anyway, your tiger onesie has won you some badass TIBO bluetooth speakers worth a grand total of £650! Well done.*

BLESSED WITH A CAKE

"I was definitely in the spirit for my 16th!" admits ***@aimeetaylor94****. We're just waiting to hear back from Oli Sykes and co to see if they're willing to get the lyrics changed to, 'True friends bring you loads of cake'. It doesn't work quite as well, but we're rolling with it.*

NO WAY POUT

"So, I met Bullet For My Valentine and they signed my Kerrang! New Breed CD!" says ***@callumdude57****. Nice! We hope the band came prepared and brought 4 Pens (To Sign Upon).*



SORRY YOU'RE NOT A GRINNER

Here's ***@S0lid4rity*** *with Rou Reynolds of Enter Shikari. What's, um, going on here? Better fetch the Anaesthetist to fix your faces. Just kidding!*

NEXT WEEK

WIN!

A PS4 AND GUITAR HERO® LIVE BUNDLE!

We're celebrating guitar heroes, but what if you're not so good with an axe yourself? Fear not, 'cause we've teamed up with **Guitar Hero® Live** to offer one lucky reader a brand-spankin'-new **PS4**, a copy of the game and a guitar controller! Tweet or Instagram your best band selfies and rockstar snaps using #Kommunity, and we'll pick a winner. Cool? For those about to plug in, we salute you…

CANCER BATS

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WED 13	BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2	SAT 23	MANCHESTER ACADEMY 3
THU 14	NORWICH WATERFRONT	SUN 24	LEEDS KEY CLUB
FRI 15	EXETER PHOENIX	MON 25	GLASGOW GARAGE
SAT 16	PLYMOUTH THE HUB	TUE 26	NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY 2
SUN 17	BRISTOL MARBLE FACTORY	WED 27	LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY 2
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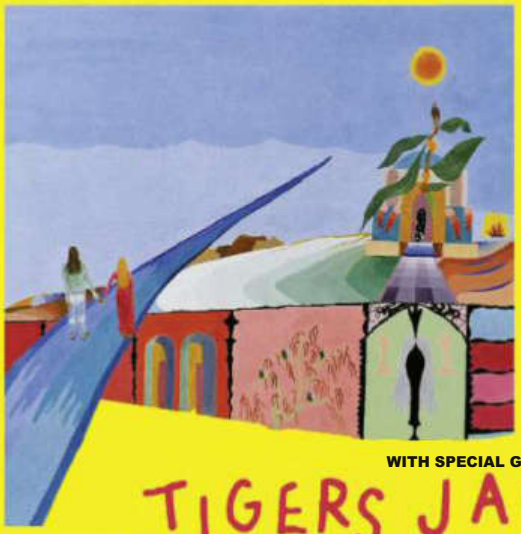

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS

TIGERS JAW

ALEX G

FEBRUARY 2016

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MONDAY 08 - GLASGOW KING TUTS
TUESDAY 09 - LEEDS STYLUS
WEDNESDAY 10 - MANCHESTER ACADEMY 2
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LEEDS BECKETT SU

WEDNESDAY 02 MARCH
LONDON
O2 SHEPHERD'S BUSH EMPIRE

THURSDAY 03 MARCH
CARDIFF
STUDENTS' UNION - Y PLAS

FRIDAY 04 MARCH
BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY 2

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SAT 30 MANCHESTER RITZ
SUN 31 NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY

FEBUARY 2016
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WED 03 GLASGOW O2 ABC
THU 04 NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
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SAT 06 LEEDS UNIVERSITY
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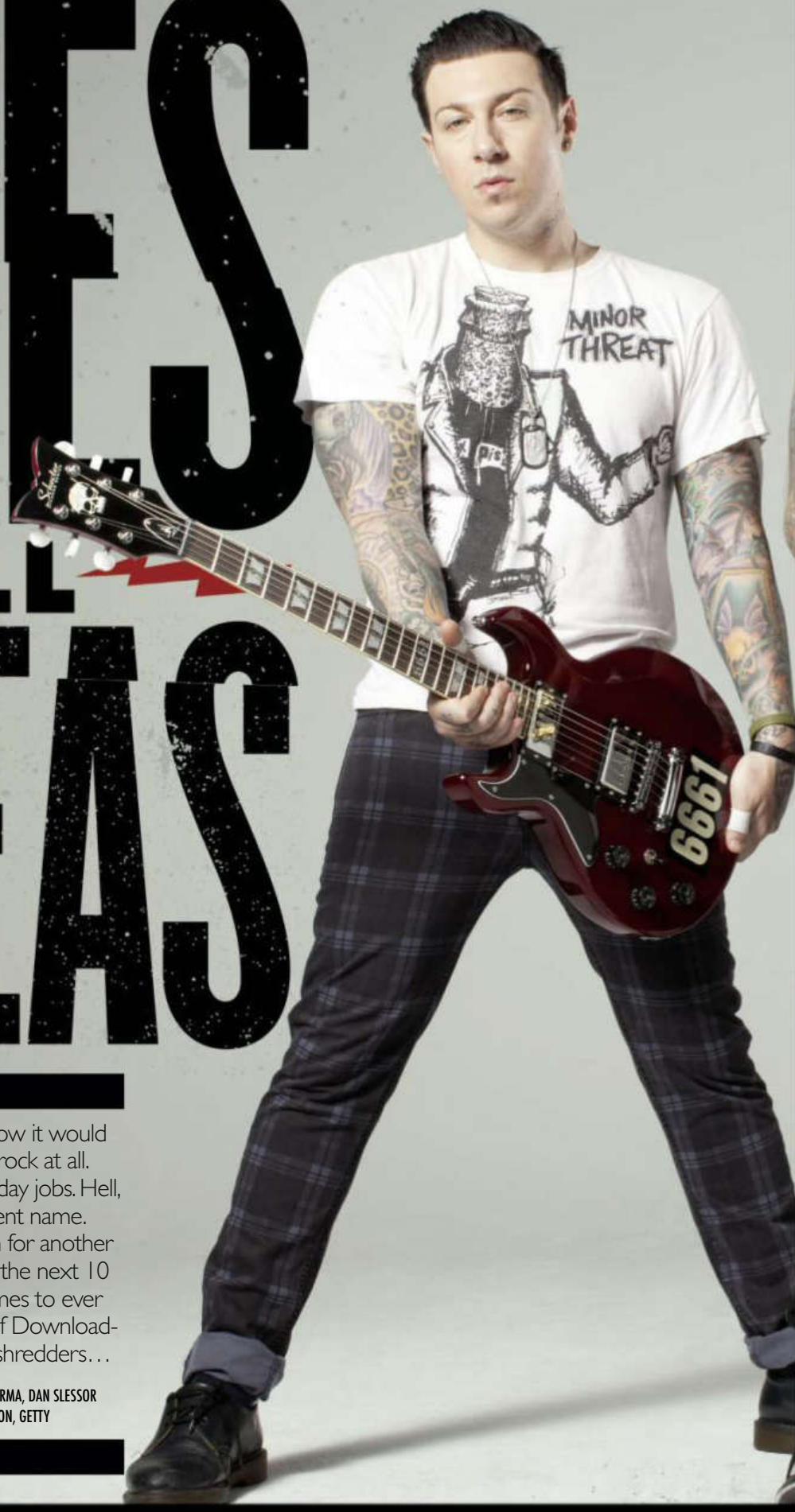
AXES ALL AREAS



Without guitars, the world as we know it would be totally different. Rock wouldn't rock at all. Legendary names would be working day jobs. Hell, even Kerrang! would have a different name. As the **Guitar Hero** games return for another finger-breakingly intense outing, over the next 10 pages we celebrate the greatest names to ever pick up an axe – starting with a pair of Download-headlining **Avenged Sevenfold** shredders…

WORDS: MATT ALLEN, TOMAS DOYLE, NICK RUSKELL, AMIT SHARMA, DAN SLESSOR
PHOTOS: JUSTIN BORUCKI, IAN COLLINS, LISA JOHNSON, GETTY

Zacky Vengeance and Synyster Gates: somewhere in Orange County, there's a bowling alley missing a pair of shoes

THE DEATHBAT DUO

ZACKY VENGEANCE & SYNYSTER GATES

WHEN TWO MEN FROM DIFFERENT SIDES OF THE TRACKS UNITED IN AVENGED SEVENFOLD, THEY WOULD NEVER HAVE GUESSED HOW MUCH THEY'D NEED EACH OTHER…

When Zacky Vengeance and Synyster Gates – better known as Zachary Baker and Brian Elwin Haner, Jr – first came together in a Huntington Beach studio around 2001, their opening night was fuelled by "awesome whisky and no-filter Chesterfield cigarettes". Their band, Avenged Sevenfold, was only just taking shape. Zacky was a lock-in, frontman M. Shadows had been installed on vocals, as had drummer James Sullivan – aka The Rev – alongside then-bassist Matt Wendt. But a lead guitarist was needed; one that could add slabs of complex riffola to their unique brand of metal. Synyster, who had studied jazz and classical guitar at the LA Musicians Institute, was being tried out.

"We all knew that he was a really great guitar player," says Zacky, recalling that first day. "Jimmy had invited Syn to check us out while we were recording [debut album] Sounding The Seventh Trumpet. Before then, I'd never played with anyone that was really talented, or who knew what they were doing. I had no idea of keeping tempo. I didn't even tune my own guitar. It was as raw and as punk rock as it could be. Syn just opened up my eyes to guitar-playing – I learned all my shredding abilities by being around him."

Synyster laughs when talking about that first session together: "Yeah, we just got fucking drunk and smoked non-filters all night long," he says. "That consecrated the bond between me and Zacky. Now we're like bar buddies. We fell in love with each other immediately."

What followed was a series of sessions that seemed easy work for Synyster – initially, at least. Though he didn't feature on their debut album, the songs already written and the formulating Avenged line-up leant strongly on thrashy notes. It was his job was to add muscle to Zacky's "heavy-as-fuck chords".

"It was a lot of fun," he says. "There were no expectations. I don't want to sound like a dick, but it was just madness. Jimmy had to do a shit-ton of work. Shadows did, too, because the vocals were pretty insane, but it was the easiest gig I'd ever had. But once we all started writing together [for the band's second album, 2003's Waking The Fallen], it turned it into a Pandora's box of madness."

What followed was a union that would soon define Zacky and Synyster as firebrand songwriters. Over the course of five studio albums – beginning with Waking The Fallen and currently in holding with 2013's Hail To The King – Avenged Sevenfold's guitar heroes pinned metal-scorched punk to corkscrew solos, disorientating tempo shifts and forays into unexpected quarters, including a brief tryst with gypsy jazz on Hail To The King. Their pioneering studio work has since established the Orange County five-piece as one of the biggest and most exciting, balls-to-the-wall bands on the planet. Their ambition shows no sign of diminishing, either.

"ZACKY AND I ARE BAR BUDDIES. WE FELL IN LOVE WITH EACH OTHER IMMEDIATELY"
● SYNYSTER GATES ●

"We sat down many months ago and asked, 'What do we wanna do [for the next album]?'" says Zacky. "It was pretty much a unanimous decision. Let's get back to doing what we love – writing anything and everything, whether it seems to fit Avenged Sevenfold's formula or not. Literally write the craziest, most ambitious music that you can, and we'll pick and choose what works best."

For Zacky, this inspiration has taken its cues from the "thrash and punk rock elements that we grew up listening to". Meanwhile, Synyster's muses are proving to be somewhat less energised.

"Late nights with some whisky, weed and documentaries," he says. "I'm not a very learned songwriter, so it's been really cool for me to see the processes used by bands like The Beatles, The Beach Boys, Guns N' Roses, Pantera, and Faith No More. I have so much access to all this information and it's absolutely enlightening and eye-opening… [But] we are taking our sweet fucking time."

It was two very different paths that brought Zacky Vengeance and Synyster Gates to the tumult of Avenged Sevenfold. Zacky was a skater kid living in Washington State – dyed hair and band T-shirts. The jerky guitar rush of Rancid and The Offspring often fired him up, as did Bad Religion and Social Distortion; all those Californian punk acts, in fact. When his parents bought him a cream-coloured Fender Stratocaster guitar at the age of 12, he was opened up to the possibilities of being in his own band.

"It ultimately made me feel important," he says. "I could lock myself in my bedroom and turn on my favourite bands, put the guitar straps around my shoulders and try my best to play along. I could truly understand what it felt like to make music. I could imagine myself playing in front of kids moshing. I'd been to so many concerts and I always dreamt of being on the stage. Holding the guitar gave me at least an ounce of hope that it could someday be me."

When Zacky's family later relocated to Huntington Beach, a seaside city in Southern California, a twist of fate orbited him around the characters that would later make up Avenged Sevenfold. He was jamming at home one afternoon, playing a Sabbath riff, most probably, or facing up to his dad's latest challenge (a $100 reward for learning Jimmy Page's solo from the Led Zeppelin track Communication Breakdown had been a tempting incentive), when there was a knock on the door. It was a neighbourhood kid. He wanted to know who was playing the guitar upstairs.

"That was strange," says Zacky. "I never thought *that* would ever happen, and sure enough he came in and told me about a band he was in and how his uncle was the drummer of ['80s punk band] Pennywise. I couldn't believe it. I thought I'd moved to the mecca of punk rock. He invited me to go check out their band practice and I couldn't comprehend the level that these kids were playing at. M. Shadows was in there at the time, though he was known as Matt then."

Synyster's story was just as fateful. The product of a musical family – his dad, uncles, and grandparents were all musicians – there was a compulsion to trace their footsteps. His first guitar was acoustic, arriving as part of a deal on a record player. Michael Jackson's face had been emblazoned on the body. "I was four," he says. "I remember playing it like a lap steel. Then my dad flipped it up and showed me how to play properly."

At first he picked up pop tunes from the radio, hits by the singer Tiffany and '80s new romantics Duran Duran. But at the age of 10, he latched onto guitar heroes on a more distorted spectrum – Jimmy Hendrix, Jimmy Page and Slash.

"I found Guns N' Roses on my own," he says. "I saw the November Rain video and I wanted to be Slash on that roof, or on the piano, on the cliff, doing all that crazy shit. That's when I fell in love with performing.

"Slash has played with us a couple of times, which was definitely an honour. Dude, he broke his string two seconds in once, and it blew my mind that he could play flawlessly with broken strings. The guy just didn't give a fuck. He came on, plugged into a Marshall, his guitar with broken strings, and was just shredding. But he was a fucking pro, a hardened veteran."

Synyster later went to the LA Musicians Institute, where he initially fancied a life as a session guitarist, laying down riffs on songs written for other musicians. But that boozy, smoky night in Huntington Beach with Zacky, The Rev and M. Shadows changed his life forever.

"Matt and Zacky were doing their hardcore thing," he says. "And I loved their approach to it. I thought it was very unique; it had a lot of punk rock and I was a huge fan of NOFX, so it seemed like a perfect marriage. The Rev was one of the best drummers – I thought the best I'd ever heard in my life. He was writing these fabulous songs on a piano. It was crazy."

It was also the beginning of a special relationship, he reckons. "There's a mutual understanding," he says of Avenged Sevenfold now. "We're all best friends and we're all growing together. A lot of people start off as friends and then they have these delusions of grandeur that they're gonna make a million dollars and it's gonna be incredible. But they're just human beings and we're all insatiable, unappreciative fucks. But if you really love each other, that's the main thing."

There have been six Avenged Sevenfold albums so far; a seventh could be on the way next year. But ask either Zacky or Synyster to name their most synched – the recording during which they've clicked the tightest – and you'll gather differing opinions. Synyster quickly opts for the twisting harmonies of 2005's City Of Evil. "It took complexity to another level," he says. "I remember Zacky getting drunk and talking a little shit on it, as we all were. I'm sure he's been a bit self-deprecating and plays down his ability, but he's pretty psychotic he can play anything that I throw at him."

"I SAW THE NOVEMBER RAIN VIDEO AND WANTED TO BE SLASH"

SYNYSTER GATES

Syn was so fussy about amps, he thought it best to just make his own – Hellwin

Zacky lists a few: Waking The Fallen for its "duelling guitars, like Iron Maiden and Children Of Bodom", and City Of Evil for the "challenging" riffs. Emotionally, he most remembers the guitars of Nightmare, the album that followed The Rev's passing in 2009.

"That made us bond as human beings," he says. "It wasn't such a technically bonding experience; it was more mental and emotional. It helped us to carry on as people. Me and Zacky were sharing an apartment while we were recording that album. We had to rely on each other to make it through the days, because it was a really dark time."

Over the course of 14 years, their studio output has been married to a mutual studio understanding – Zacky and Synyster know how the other operates best. There's also been a desire to formulate the greatest music possible, and any egos, they both claim, are left at the door during Avenged Sevenfold sessions.

"As far as the studio goes, there's one rule," says Zacky. "That's to do whatever's necessary to make the greatest-sounding album. And that's it. There's really no other formula. And if there's something that's played by me then I'll step in and play it. If there's something that's played by him, he does it. If someone's having a good day, and has energy and wants to be there doing it, and the other is sick of sitting there for 10 hours, then they can switch out. And that goes for anybody in the band."

This flexible M.O. looks set to continue. For their next, as-yet-untitled album, Avenged Sevenfold have been writing within a focused work ethic. Songs and guitar parts are currently undergoing individual treatments before being emailed around the other members. Though there have been a number of group writing sessions, too. M. Shadows recently bought a second house out in the Californian desert. For the past few months, Avenged have been meeting there for jams. Ideas have been fleshed out. The aim is to write as much as is "humanly possible".

"It's still early days," says Zacky. "There are definitely songs that have taken shape to the point where they're songs, and I think everyone's excited about them. We're just having fun. We're writing in a manner that's reminiscent of our early days, of just writing as much as possible, and writing stuff that we love. It's pouring out of us, too.

"I don't think there's been much of a standstill on anyone's ideas or creativity. We're trying all sorts of things to get inspired. We're trying to write the best music we're capable of. And by any means necessary."

Avenged Sevenfold's songwriting has come full-circle, then. The creative camaraderie that informed their earliest work has been recaptured. But, like everything this band has done over the years, their next album is unlikely to represent a backwards step. It's just a downer they're taking their "sweet fucking time" about it…

Mid-solo was not the right time for M. to instigate a human pyramid

TALES BEHIND THE RIFF!

ZACKY AND SYNYSTER REVEAL THE SECRETS BEHIND THEIR FAVOURITE A7X LICKS!

BAT COUNTRY

ZACKY: "I think it's four notes. It came about from us wanting something really raw. It doesn't take much to make a super-powerful riff – and that nailed it. It's heavy enough to keep us in the metal category, and almost has a Motörhead vibe to it. There are a lot of guitar players that get ahead of themselves and try to come up with something crazy. Sometimes the most impressive riffs are the ones that are straightforward."

FIND IT: **CITY OF EVIL (2005)**

AFTERLIFE

SYNYSTER: "The verse riff came about kinda funny. Jimmy wrote that song, but he didn't have a riff for the verse, so he was like, 'I want something like this!' [*Starts making spiralling guitar solo noises*] I didn't get what he was saying, but I picked up a guitar and played that riff without a moment's hesitation. He freaked out! I later won an award for it, too. Jimmy was like, 'I'm taking that – that's my riff!'"

FIND IT: **AVENGED SEVENFOLD (2008)**

SAVE ME

ZACKY: "The first half of this song has an incredible guitar riff. It's super-dark, super-haunting. That was just all of us wanting to write something really, really dark – and kinda evil. That was before Jimmy had passed, and once we lost him and recorded Save Me, it took on a whole new darkness. It became real. It was no longer just a riff. It was real life and you could hear that in the music. It was a little bit clairvoyant."

FIND IT: **NIGHTMARE (2010)**

HAIL TO THE KING

SYNYSTER: "It's the high strings [for me]. I'd been playing a lot of gypsy jazz and that was a gypsy jazz technique. If you listen to gypsy jazz at all, it sounds like a toddler – a full savant toddler playing jazz. It's so adolescent-sounding to me that [I didn't think that] it would cross over or translate. But that one did. And it was cool to have a gypsy jazz riff that sounded like a classic rock track."

FIND IT: **HAIL TO THE KING (2013)**

TURN FOR MORE TALES BEHIND THE RIFFS & EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS!

TALES BEHIND THE RIFF!

EVER WONDERED HOW ROCK'S GREATEST RIFFS CAME INTO BEING? FIVE GUITAR GODS REVEAL ALL...

LINKIN PARK
ONE STEP CLOSER

Brad Delson's career-defining moment? A total accident...

"Before the band took off, we were doing a photoshoot with a friend of ours in an underground parking garage, and I had my guitar with me specifically to be in the pictures. I was just messing around in a drop C-sharp tuning while things were being set up, and I came up with that harmonic octave riff, which remains one of my favourites to this day. I then took this and evolved it into the fuller, chord version that is the main riff of the song. That underpins the verses, and then the chorus is a melodic progression beyond that, so the whole song is basically born of the riff I came up with in that garage.

"I honestly couldn't tell you what it is about that riff that connects with so many people, but I know that when we play it live, it's always one of our strongest songs. The thing with that riff is that it's all about the feel. It's not super-technical, and I've heard amazing guitarists covering it – guys who could shred me into the *ground*, and for the life of them it never sounds right. Anyone attempting to play it really needs to just be really loose, and I mean your whole body has to be loose, because the key to it is nailing the syncopation and the bounce. It's all about the up – not the down."

A world without One Step Closer? You've no idea who these men are

FIND IT: HYBRID THEORY (2000)

BLACK VEIL BRIDES
IN THE END

Jake Pitts' crowning glory was a case of working backwards...

"We recorded the album Wretched And Divine with John Feldmann [The Used, All Time Low] and, in writing it, we used a completely different style to the way we were used to working. We came up with all the vocal melodies first, so, instead of the song starting with a riff and then building it up from there, we had a basic structure with the chord progressions. Then [fellow guitarist] Jinxx and I started coming up with the riffs and really fleshing the songs out.

"I like to take a few runs at things, and I'll keep rewriting them over and over until I get it right. With that one I knew I wanted to take the basic notes and make it a bit more interesting and dramatic, and that meant also giving it more flow. From there, we then worked on making the really epic duelling leads that the song climaxes with.

With his guitar not plugged in, Jake took to simply shouting his parts

"I think what makes that riff great is the movement, but at the same time keeping it quite straightforward made sense and letting the leads kind of go all over the place. And I think we nailed everything about that song. I don't think there's a recipe for trying to write a great riff – it's a case of you feel it or you don't, and if you have any doubts, it isn't right."

FIND IT: WRETCHED AND DIVINE: THE STORY OF THE WILD ONES (2013)

MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE
HELENA

'Feel over flair' defines Frank Iero's playing – and this MCR classic

"I remember when we were doing Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge and started writing Helena, that I had a very strong feeling about how the various parts of that song should join together. I put together this octave line in the verses to work with the vocal and also fill in some gaps instrumentally. For me, the primary inspiration for that section of the song is lot of late-'90s indie rock and emo, specifically bands like The Get Up Kids. I remember listening to [1997 album] Four Minute Mile by them and being amazed at how their guitarists interlocked, playing all these notes that seemed to be sliding by each other at all times. That part of the song was heavily influenced by them, but, as well as that, I wanted something that really pulled you into that tempo headfirst – so it almost feels like a relief when you get to the chorus. It's about pacing, playing on those dynamics and taking the listener through various states and stages of interest.

"I've always been someone who puts a lot more emphasis on the *feel* of things rather than technical brilliance, so I always looked to that first when we wrote songs. Both my dad and his dad were drummers, as well, so I think I have a pretty strong sense of rhythm and cadence when I write – and that is something that comes though with Helena pretty strongly, I'd say. I also recall being really adamant that at the end there had to be a big shift in the melody back to a repetitious thing from the beginning. I think that aspect of it works pretty neatly.

"In the end I was really, really proud of that song. I'm proud of everything we did in that band, but as a guitarist that song is a real standout moment for me."

FIND IT: THREE CHEERS FOR SWEET REVENGE (2004)

We don't know who 'NJ' is, but they're gonna be mad when they find out their guitar strap is missing

The denim memo clearly didn't reach all of Megadeth

MEGADETH

TORNADO OF SOULS

Dave Mustaine knows when to call a riff a riff…

"My musical preferences have always leaned toward being very riff-oriented, and I think there are a lot people who *think* they play riffs, but they're not riffs to me. Making a riff is not about strumming chords, it's pedalling and picking, finding those notes and making them count. Tornado Of Souls was an intense and aggressive effort to showcase *that* riff. It was actually written during a time that was really, really bad for us. There was only David [Ellefson, bass] and I in the band, and we were squatting in abandoned houses just to get by. But we were coming up with all of these great riffs. If you have a riff that you can play over and over again and it won't get monotonous, *that's* when you know you have a great riff."

FIND IT: Rust In Peace (1990)

LED ZEPPELIN

KASHMIR

Even rock royalty like Jimmy Page sometimes just make it up on the fly

"I basically [came up with] the Kashmir riff on the tail end of something else that was written on an acoustic. It was sat right at the end of a rather lengthy piece. I had the opening riff, as you know, and I thought I'd work on it when I got together with the rest of the band at [Hampshire studio] Headley Grange. As it turned out, it was just me and [drummer] John Bonham that day. We worked on it to get the riff going 'round, and just laid it down with a 12-string electric guitar playing the brass parts. The idea of an orchestra on top of this riff which went 'round and 'round is something that went back to when I listened to classical music. I had a voracious appetite for guitar music – but also there was Indian music, Arabic music and sitar music. If it grabbed me, I would incorporate it in my playing."

FIND IT: Physical Graffiti (1975)

Jimmy Page: "Six strings? Pfft"

The game's 'Guitar Hero', Slash, not 'Gurn Hero'

GUITAR HEROES

THE LONE GUNMAN

SLASH

THE FORMER **GUNS N' ROSES** AND **VELVET REVOLVER** AXEMAN PLAYS BY HIS OWN SIX-STRING RULES…

HOW HAS YOUR PLAYING CHANGED OVER THE YEARS?

"I'd like to think I've improved a lot. From playing, I know I've gotten better I can feel it. You know things are more accessible to you note-wise and technique-wise, and how intimidating the guitar is to you. But style-wise, it hasn't really changed that much. I think with everything I do in music, I'm just trying to perfect what turned me on in the first place. I don't want to be good at fuckin' shit I don't listen to or don't want to do, just for the sake of it. Anything I learn, I want to be able to apply it to what I'm into. So, I don't really try getting good at everything. To tell you the truth, to play two notes that really mean something is enough of a challenge, still!"

WHAT WOULD SAY DEFINES THAT SIGNATURE 'SLASH APPROACH' TO GUITAR? YOU NEVER SEEMED TO RELY ON ANY ONE SPECIFIC TECHNIQUE…

"Well, for example, tapping… that was already Eddie's [Van Halen] thing. You have all these people that argue over which guy was the first to do the whole fuckin' finger-tapping thing. But whoever it was, Eddie came out and he had his trip. And everybody jumped on it. And that always bothered me. With blues and rock guitar, it was more universal… the techniques were a little more subtle. But Eddie had an indirect influence on me anyway. I still love what he does, period. When he does a rock lick, it's a proper fuckin' dig-in rock lick!"

WHAT'S THE MOST DIFFICULT THING YOU'VE OVERCOME AS A GUITARIST?

"Getting records done with Scott Weiland [when in Velvet Revolver] was pretty hard (*laughs*)! The hardest thing was probably the record with all those different singers [2010's solo self-titled record]. There was a lot of moving parts on that one!"

YOU'VE COLLABORATED WITH A FAIR NUMBER OF OTHER MUSICIANS OVER THE YEARS. WHICH WAS YOUR FAVOURITE COLLABORATION?

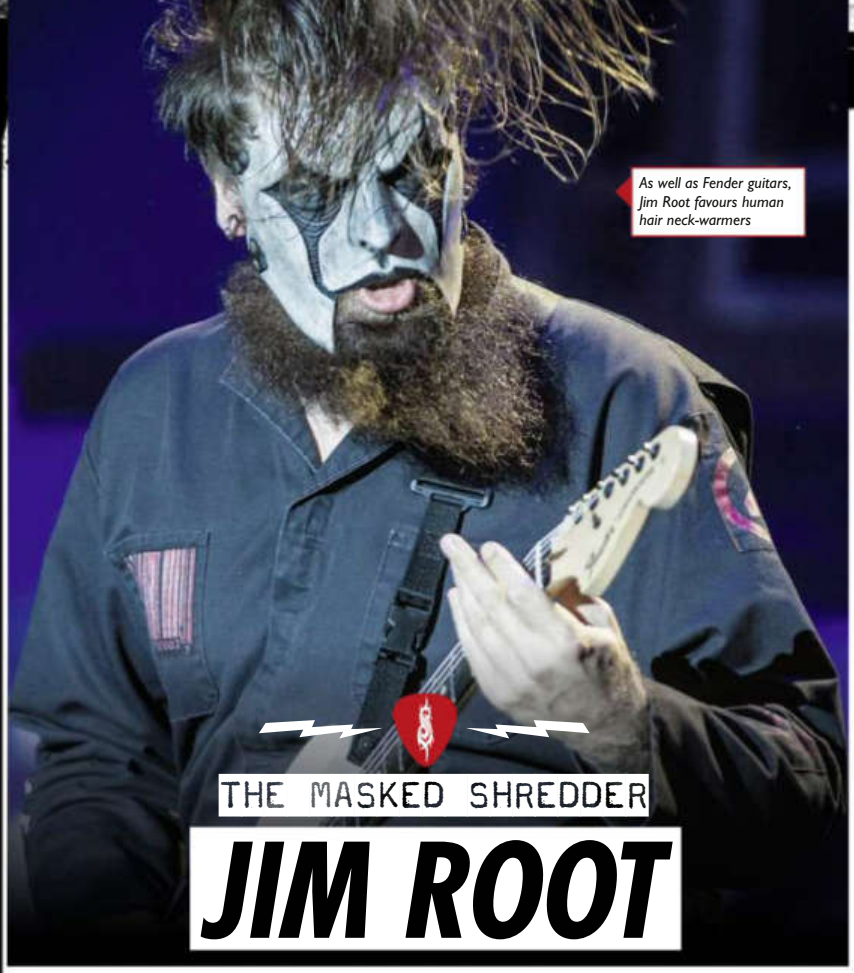
"It depends on how important they are to me as an influence, Like, working with Lemmy was a fuckin' great thing, working with Ray Charles was a big one, Iggy Pop was another big one. Then there's jamming with Aerosmith or [The Rolling Stones'] Ronnie Wood… Those are all people that had a really big impact on who I am, since I was a kid. But, then again, there have been people I've played with that were just phenomenal to work with. All things considered, working with Fergie [from The Black Eyed Peas] was fuckin' great! She did a fuckin' amazing job and it was a huge honour. It was one of my favourite collaborations."

"MICHAEL JACKSON WAS A FUCKIN' GREAT GUY"

● SLASH ●

WHAT WAS IT LIKE WORKING WITH MICHAEL JACKSON?

"Michael was not a direct influence on me, like Iggy Pop, but he was someone I grew up with… all his Jackson 5 stuff. He was such an amazing talent. He was really into whatever it was I did for whatever reason… We had a really great time doing it he was a fuckin' great guy."



As well as Fender guitars, Jim Root favours human hair neck-warmers

THE MASKED SHREDDER

JIM ROOT

EVEN WHEN YOU'RE THE CHIEF AXEMAN IN **SLIPKNOT**, YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD TO LEARN A THING OR TWO…

HOW HAS YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN SLIPKNOT'S SONGWRITING CHANGED OVER THE YEARS?

"I've been involved with the process since I joined the band in 2001, when we started working on Iowa. I'd sit with Paul [Gray] a lot and had a good sense of how he would work. When we worked out Vermillion Pt. 2 together, we were just bouncing things off each other and then I'd sit back and watch Paul. Sometimes, he could never find a left-handed guitar, so he'd take a right-handed guitar and flip it upside down and do all these weird chord intervals. I noticed, when I was doing the demos for .5: The Gray Chapter – when I became the main riff-writer – I was trying to move all around the fretboard to try and figure out a better way, or a better interval, or a new shape to the chord and stuff like that. 'Maybe this note's better than that note, even if it doesn't follow the scale,' y'know? And I realised that that's how Paul wrote."

HOW DID YOU TAKE TO BECOMING THE MAIN WRITER ON .5: THE GRAY CHAPTER?

"With the new Slipknot album, I started clean, from scratch, and I didn't take any old ideas from old hard drives or anything like that. I got a brand-new hard drive and a brand-new folder and was like, 'This is it.' Once I'd finish an arrangement, to the point where I had a four-minute arrangement that felt like a song, minus the vocals, I'd layer the guitars, left-right guitars, third guitars, put bass on it, program drums across the top of it – and then, whether I started with drums or bass or guitars, I'd get it bounced down and email it to Clown."

SLIPKNOT BASSIST V-MAN HAS A REPUTATION AS A PRETTY FEARSOME GUITAR PLAYER. HOW HAS HAVING SOMEONE LIKE THAT IN YOUR BAND INFLUENCED YOUR PLAYING?

"He's a monster. Because he's a monster, he's got me playing better, too. He has better discipline with his instrument than I do. Like, if I'm not writing, I never touch my guitar, but I hear him and it makes me go, 'Alright, maybe I should get on this!' That's how you become better as a player."

"FOR ME, ATTITUDE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN TECHNIQUE"
● JIM ROOT ●

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER MORE IMPORTANT TO A GUITARIST: TECHNICAL ABILITY OR FEEL?

"I'm old-school and, for me, attitude is more important than technique. Attitude, melody and emotion. That's not to say you can't riff a 32nd note scale and have emotion with it, but equally you can rip an A harmonic-minor scale at whatever BPM on a metronome and it doesn't mean you can write a song like Wait And Bleed!"

WHO ARE THE GUITARISTS THAT INSPIRE YOU?

"There's lots of people, but I'd say guys like [Pink Floyd's] David Gilmour, who has that mix of brilliant technicality *and* incredible emotion. In fact, that's how me and V-man first bonded. We'd be sitting in with Martin, my guitar tech, and end up just talking about guitars and fantastic players like Gilmour."

MY GUITAR ICON

THE STARS REVEAL THE NAMES THAT CONTINUE TO INSPIRE AND INFLUENCE…

JAMES HETFIELD, METALLICA

BY MATT TUCK, BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE

"I think what makes James Hetfield's playing so distinctive and immediately recognisable is how aggressive his right hand is. That's the key to getting a really tight guitar stroke: it's in your right hand – if you're right-handed, that is, otherwise it's your left! There's something so ferocious in that, the way he almost *attacks* the strings with every stroke. I knew I wanted to be able to master that, too, and it took me a lot of time. One thing that I've always appreciated is that, over the years and over the records, his playing has stayed basically the same. He's always had that same style, the parts becoming a little more thought-out from record to record, but it's right there. Even on [1983 debut] Kill 'Em All, those signature riffs shine through as much as they do on their later records. You could talk classic Hetfield riffs all day long."

"DAVE GROHL epitomises what a classic rock guitarist should be in my eyes. He has proven that you don't have to conform to passing trends that a lot of modern bands follow. Hearing **FOO FIGHTERS** inspired me to go back to the roots of guitar-playing."

JAMES GILLETT, MALLORY KNOX

DIMEBAG DARRELL, PANTERA

BY MATT HEAFY, TRIVIUM

"What made Dimebag such an incredible guitarist? He was so well versed in every aspect of playing: rhythm, leads, songwriting, knowing how to make interesting sounds, knowing how to make a good tone – and he had one of the most distinctive guitar tones in metal. He was one of those people who just *had it*. He could do anything he wanted on the guitar, but one of the things I love about his playing is that he made heavy metal complexity simpler. You can *sing* his riffs. He wrote things that were hooky and memorable but heavy-as-fuck at the same time. Obviously he could shred like a motherfucker, too, but he never pushed things for the sake of it. He had this amazing minimalism and this ability to say more in two notes than most modern guitar players can say in 20."

Dimebag: 11 years gone, his influence is still etched across metal

Billie: unhappy about being squeezed into such a small box

"When I was growing up, **GREEN DAY**'s Dookie was like the Bible to me. I sat in my room with my little Marshall amp and learnt it note-for-note trying to get the same raw sound. **BILLIE JOE ARMSTRONG** showed it's not how many chords you play, it's how you play 'em."

STITCH D, THE DEFILED

True story: Kurt claimed to favour cheaper guitars as it was hard to find high-quality, reasonably priced left-handed models

ADRIAN SMITH & DAVE MURRAY, IRON MAIDEN

BY HERMAN LI, DRAGONFORCE

"I still remember the feeling I had when I first heard the twin guitar attacks from Maiden. Even though back then I didn't even know it was a guitar, the feeling I had hearing it was totally electrifying. Great guitar leads and solos are what drew me into metal and rock in the first place, but it's not about that one solo, that one song or 'that' album. It's all about how they were able to do it again and again for many years. The great melodies and fearless approach to the guitar are just two of the many things that have inspired DragonForce."

Maiden: Adrian Smith (far left) and Dave Murray (second from right)

TOM MORELLO, RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

BY TOM WILLIAMS, STRAY FROM THE PATH

"The trait I most love about Tom is his ability to make simple riffs that are very catchy, while at the same time pushing the envelope. No-one can fuck with him, and he has such a unique guitar tone. There's no distortion, no tricks – just great playing. And don't get me started on the crazy leads and shit he does! I remember when [1999 album] The Battle Of Los Angeles was coming out and he referred to making his guitar sound like a *cow* on Mic Check – and then hearing that for the first time it's like, 'What the hell! That *is* a cow!'"

"**BEN WEINMAN** is probably not a traditional guitar hero, but that's what I love about his playing: it's unconventional. From the music he writes with **THE DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN**, to the way he performs, there's no-one like him."

TOM SEARLE, ARCHITECTS

KURT COBAIN, NIRVANA

BY JOSHUA CAIN, MOTION CITY SOUNDTRACK

"The best thing about Kurt Cobain was watching somebody just not give a fuck when they were playing the guitar. You can watch that Reading Festival show they did in '92 and you can see when he fucks up he realises and just *keeps* fucking up and playing the wrong note on purpose. That's what I love about him; that it wasn't about perfection, but about doing what was raw and true and noisy and crazy. Growing up, he gave me a lot of hope because I was pretty terrible and couldn't play mad guitar solos like Guns N' Roses or whatever. But that wasn't where I was coming from anyway; my vibe was, 'What kind of cool noise can I get out of my guitar?' and that is something I got directly from watching Kurt play. He would play so passionately and so *hard*, all the time.

"Sometimes the guitar wouldn't do the thing that he would want it to do and he would get angry and smash it into a million pieces. I always thought that was fucking cool; it was like he was constantly fighting his instrument and trying to get it to make the sound that was inside him. Sometimes he succeeded and sometimes he didn't, but you always knew he was doing it with absolute honesty. I think a lot of 'proper guitarists' hated him for that reason, because he had almost a disrespect for the instrument, but in my mind that's what makes him such a unique and iconic player."

PLAY LIKE YOUR HEROES

WANT TO LEARN TO RIFF LIKE YOUR FAVOURITE GUITARISTS? THEN HEED THEIR WORDS OF WISDOM...

We didn't have room for a sixth pointer, but it definitely would have been 'Play topless'

FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH

Want that big, ugly guitar sound? Zoltan Bathory is your man...

"Everything about my setup is custom. My string gauge is .66 to .13 – and those things are like fucking piano wires. One of the biggest upsides to this is that you're going to have an ugly, ferocious sound, and when you hit an open B chord it sounds like nothing else in the world. And I never use pedals for distortion. It's all created in the amp, and I try to find the breaking point, where if I hit my strings really hard you get the massive, distorted sound you're looking for every time."

HALESTORM

Lzzy Hale has one motto to play by: keep it simple

"I keep it simple, because I'm a simple gal and I like to plug in and play. Every time I jam with people, they tell me my approach to guitar is not like a guitar player. I'm melody first, which comes from being a singer and piano player originally, and my riffs and solos always end up being singable – which just must be how my brain works. I have this thing that I do on some songs, though, which is kind of a slapping technique. My left hand is hitting the strings rather than it all coming out of my right hand – give it a try."

PARKWAY DRIVE

Luke Kilpatrick and Jeff Ling explain getting that PWD crunch

LUKE KILPATRICK: "We've started to think a lot more recently about the idea of riffs that kids can sing along to and sing back at us. If you think about guitar parts as extra melody lines, then that can help when you sit down in the rehearsal room to work through the best ideas."

JEFF LING: "We've gone through quite a big change in our setups recently, too..."

LUKE: "We still use a lot of ESP guitars with EMG pickups, and they are a big part of our sound. That being said, instead of traditional amps, we've moved over to amp-modelling software, which lets you dial in the tones for almost any amp anywhere, and it sounds as good as – if not better than – the real thing."

JEFF: "As much a part of getting to sound like any guitarist you like is about practicing and learning the songs and the techniques they employ."

LUKE: "When I was growing up, that's how I learnt to play guitar – by finding the bands I liked and practicing their techniques. For me, that was bands like Pennywise."

JEFF: "So, for us, that's things like palm muting, tremolo picking and understanding drop-B tuning. People say it all the time, but it's true: no amount of expensive gear will make you sound good, unless you practise."

BIFFY CLYRO

Simon Neil breaks down his five essential pointers for the guitar n00b

1 DON'T GET HUNG UP ON LESSONS

"Don't take too many guitar lessons. It's important to learn the basics, but don't worry too much about techniques, details, scales and things like that. I think they reduce your creativity and choices, because you're suddenly aware on a technical level of which choices you're making."

2 LET THE RHYTHM LEAD YOU

"When you're trying to get used to singing and playing together, just play roughly in the rhythm you're aiming for and, before you know it, your right hand will be able to look after itself. Your hands will get comfortable alongside your vocal and you won't even realise. Don't panic about it – that's the main thing!"

3 DON'T STRESS OVER YOUR GEAR

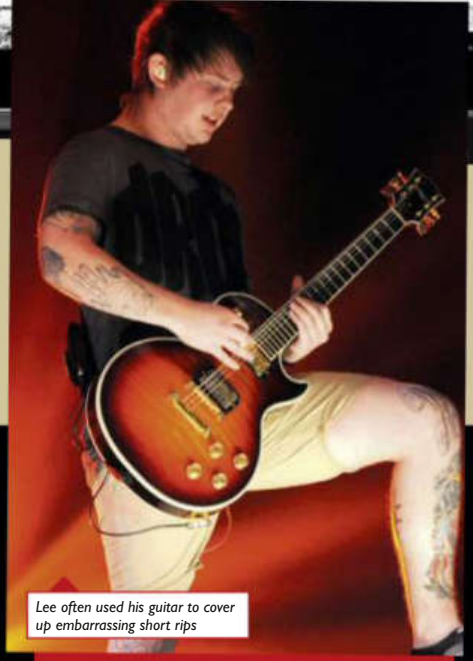
"Don't worry about spending loads on gear. Every guitarist sounds different, and you can spend £10,000 on amps and expensive guitars and still sound shit. You can pick up a really cheap guitar that still sounds fantastic."

4 REMEMBER YOU'RE ONE OF A TEAM

"When you're writing songs, always remember that the best songs aren't virtuoso. Just because someone is amazingly fast at guitar, doesn't make them any good at guitar. I didn't take many guitar lessons and actually played violin before, so that informed my playing a lot more than wanting to be able to shred. In fact, because of the violin, I do a lot of four-finger chords, which is probably quite unusual and helps give Biffy our sound. So, whatever weird way you play, it can turn out to be what distinguishes you, so embrace it!"

5 AND FINALLY...

"Grow your hair and a fucking beard!"



Lee often used his guitar to cover up embarrassing short rips

BRING ME THE HORIZON

The five essentials when making a Lee Malia-shaped riff

1 THE GUITAR

"I use Gibson Les Pauls. Well, now I use my custom Epiphone [a Gibson sub-company] Les Paul. I was blown away when they said they wanted to do one for me. I like Les Pauls because they've got a really nice tone. It's such a classic guitar, and they're really tough, as well. They're like a tank."

2 THE STRINGS

"I use pretty heavy strings to get some good bottom-end. We tune down really low, so you need heavy strings – C or drop-A tuning. So, you have to have something really thick, like .70 gauge. That's where a lot of heaviness comes from, rather than loads of distortion – having a low, thick tone."

3 THE AMP

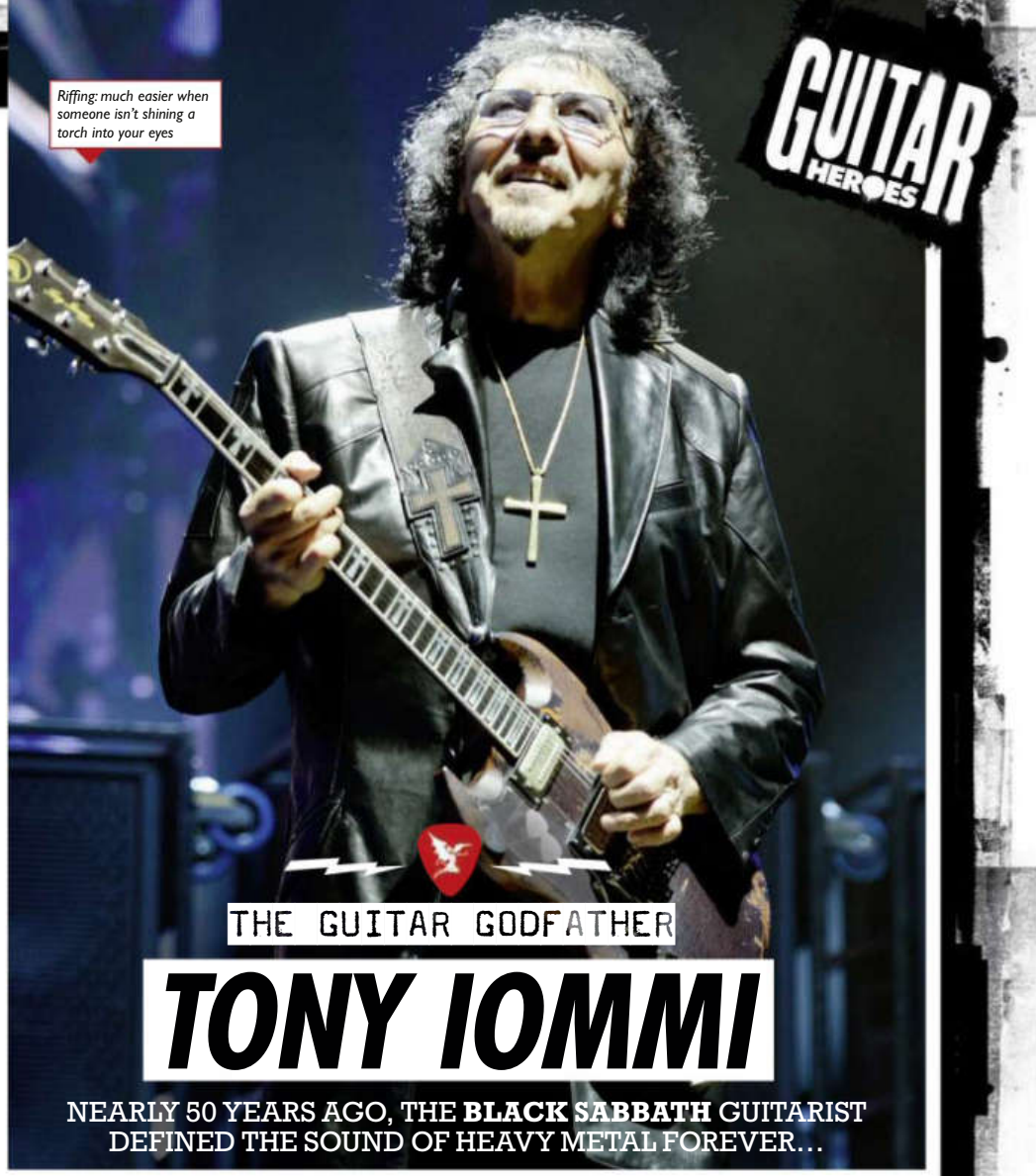
"I used to use Matamps, which is a local company in Sheffield. But now I use a Marshall JCM 800. It's a classic. You can't put too much distortion and gain through it. Some people use loads of distortion, and it kind of hides everything. This amp, you don't need to put too much distortion through it, and it sounds great."

4 THE TECHNIQUE

"I'm more into playing bluesy stuff than really shreddy, technical stuff. I think shredding's cool if it suits what you're doing, but often I like to go with something a bit more simple. A good riff doesn't have to have loads of notes in it. You can be just as heavy and effective doing something with a good groove and rhythm on just an open string."

5 THE INFLUENCE

"The band that made me want to pick up the guitar was Metallica. I learned a load of their songs and practiced them over and over. They're a good band because they do so much. There's the fast stuff, but then you play some of it and you realise how simple some of it is, too, but it sounds really complicated."



Riffing: much easier when someone isn't shining a torch into your eyes

THE GUITAR GODFATHER

TONY IOMMI

NEARLY 50 YEARS AGO, THE **BLACK SABBATH** GUITARIST DEFINED THE SOUND OF HEAVY METAL FOREVER...

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO PICK UP THE GUITAR AS A KID?

"Well, I used to listen to the radio, and rock'n'roll stuff from Chuck Berry, and then I liked the Shadows. Because they were instrumental, I could learn to play the tunes by myself. There weren't that many guitar heroes in England, to be honest. There was [influential Brit guitarist] Bert Weedon and [Shadows axeman] Hank Marvin and not much else you could hear in them days."

HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN YOU STARTED THINKING YOU COULD BE A MUSICIAN YOURSELF?

"I used to play accordion, so I suppose that's my first path to being a musician. All my relations played accordion or drums or some sort of instrument. I picked up the guitar when I was about 13 or 14. Where I lived wasn't exactly the greatest spot. You either joined a gang or you became interested in something else, and it was the music that got me out of being in gangs."

"MUSIC GOT ME OUT OF BEING IN GANGS"

● TONY IOMMI ●

YOU SEVERED YOUR FINGERTIPS IN AN INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT. HOW DID THAT CHANGE YOUR PLAYING?

"I had to change everything. There was a lot of stuff I wasn't able to play when I had my fingers chopped off. The first thing for me was having to make some tips to play with, because my fingers were raw and I couldn't touch anything. I made some fingertips for myself out of a Fairy Liquid bottle. I melted it down and got it in the shape of a ball, and then got a hot soldering iron and made a hole in it so it fitted over my finger. Then I glued on some old leather for grip. There were certain chords I couldn't play, of course, because I had these big blobs of stuff on the end of my fingers. It was a whole new way of playing. I had to put lighter strings on because I couldn't press the heavier strings. I used a banjo string for the top string. It made me play in a different style and come up with a bigger sound. The idea was to try and make the sound as big as I could, with my limits."

WHAT MAKES FOR A GOOD RIFF?

"Good notes! When I write a riff, I try to put myself in a mood of what I want to write. It's just the feel. Usually, the simplest are better. Look at Paranoid – couldn't get a simpler riff than that. Most of our stuff has been simple. It may be simple notes, but it's how you attack it. It's like a fine wine – you've got to let it breathe. But then it'll sound different as soon as you play it with a band, because of what they're doing as well. But simplicity is important, I think."

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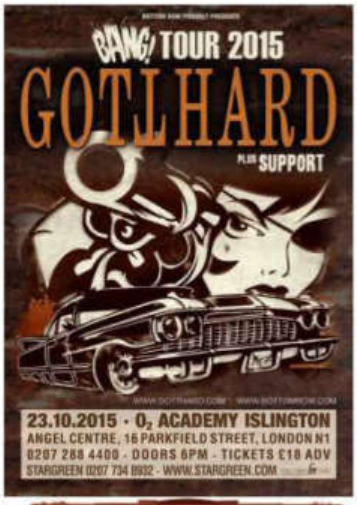
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WORDS: PAUL TRAVERS **PHOTOS:** ANDREW LIPOVSKY, GETTY

WITH THEIR CURRENT UK TOUR PROVING WHY THE WORLD SHOULD NEVER HAVE DOUBTED THE POST-DANNY WORSNOP **ASKING ALEXANDRIA**, **BEN BRUCE** TAKES US DEEP INSIDE THE ALBUM THAT'S SET TO CHANGE EVERYTHING…

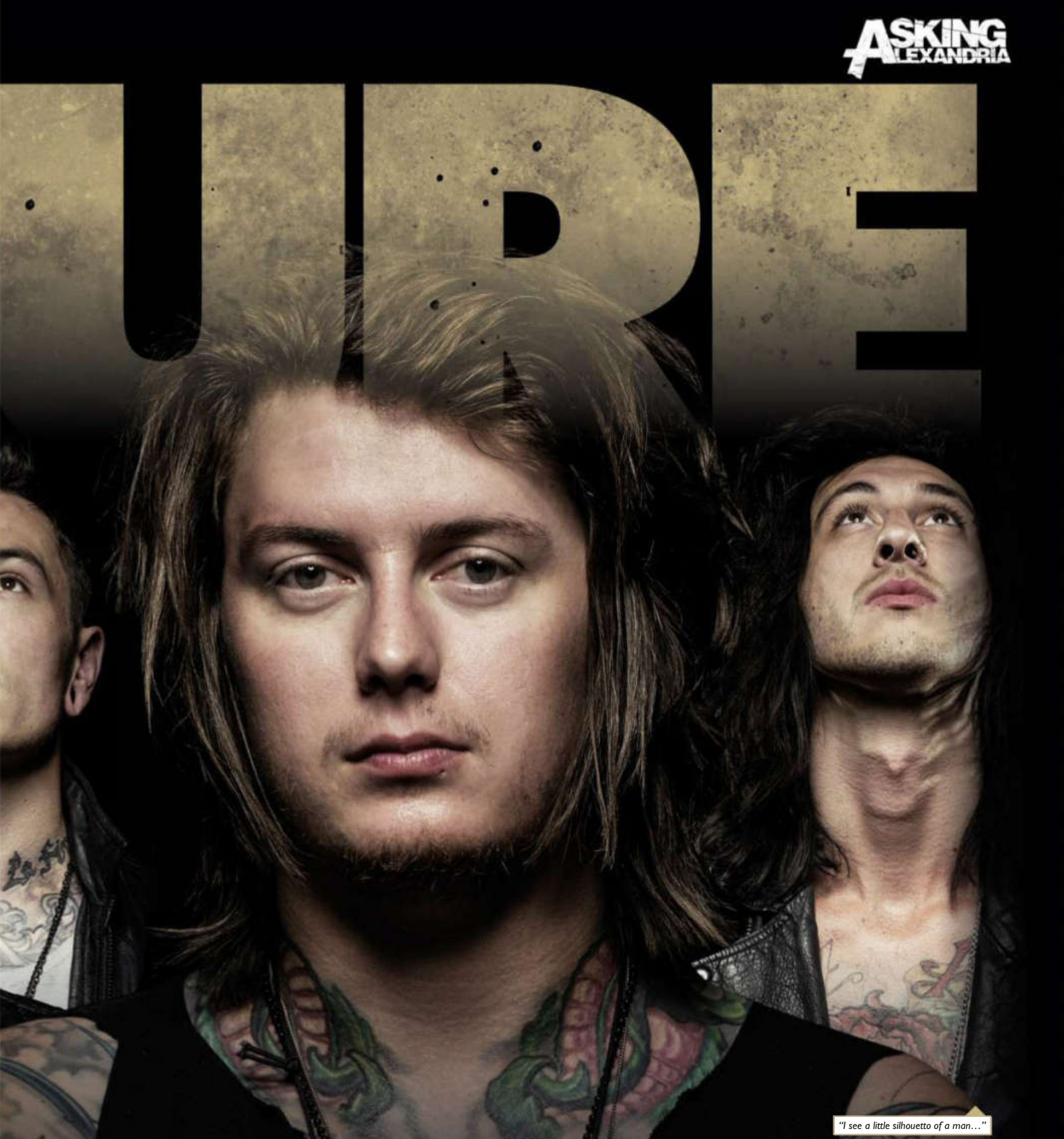
It's been a long time coming, but the new incarnation of Asking Alexandria have finally hit their home shores. Earlier this year, visa problems saw the band having to cancel summer shows in Manchester and London, delaying their new vocalist Denis Stoff's UK debut. It meant that a handful of Euro fests and then Warped Tour in the U.S. got to see them first, but now they're here and tearing through the UK.

They've already unveiled two new songs in I Won't Give In and the viciously barbed Undivided, but, with appetites whetted by Warped UK and the band's own headline run, what the world is now waiting for is the Asking Alexandria album that will define their future. The band had put it to bed literally days before boarding a plane for the UK and, says Ben Bruce, they're chomping at the bit for you lot to hear it. We asked the guitarist just what we could expect from Asking Alexandria v2.0…

BEN, DID YOU FEEL ANY PRESSURE TO COME BACK WITH SOMETHING SPECIAL WHEN YOU WERE MAKING THIS ALBUM?

"To a certain extent, yes. It's our first full release with Denis singing, so obviously we were like, 'This *has* to be fantastic, it *has* to better than the last album.' We have to give people something to talk about. So, to begin with, there was a bit of anxiety

TIRE



"I see a little silhouetto of a man…"

and a lot of weight on my shoulders, but once we got into the swing of it, all that pressure was released. We've put a lot of time and effort into this, and I genuinely think that our fans are going to love it."

WITH THAT EARLY SENSE OF PRESSURE, WERE THE RECORDING SESSIONS INTENSE?

"You'd think they would have been, but we've recorded every album with our producer, Joey Sturgis, so just going there was almost like going and staying with a dear family friend. It's quite relaxed and we work hard but, at the same time, we just have a laugh. We crack open some bottles of wine and start recording and it just… flows. There's no pressure to make everything perfect, because then it comes across as unnatural and forced. We just sat down and jammed the songs until we got the take."

ARE YOU NOT AT ALL NERVOUS ABOUT HOW FANS MIGHT RECEIVE IT?

"No, I'm not nervous at all. The response to the two songs we've released so far in I Won't Give In and Undivided has just been incredible. There's been nothing but positivity and we're seeing it every night. We're playing those songs and everybody knows all the words already, it's going off live, and even the responses online have been really positive. The rest of the album has songs that are just as good, if not better, so I'm more excited than nervous to finally get it out there and let everyone hear what we've been working on."

WHEN CAN WE EXPECT TO HEAR THE ALBUM?

"I think we're planning to release it in January, to start the new year off with a bang. It just seems counter-productive almost, when we've been working towards this for over a year, to release it at the end of the year. It seems like a bit of an anticlimax and we'd rather make sure we start 2016 with a bang instead."

Revealed: the dangers of not grounding your guitar's electrics properly

YOU PREVIOUSLY SAID THAT YOU SPENT LAST SUMMER LOCKED IN THE BACK OF YOUR TOUR BUS, WRITING. ARE THOSE SESSIONS STILL THE BASIS FOR THIS NEW ALBUM?

"Actually, no. I ended up scrapping a lot of that because when I was writing those tunes, it was when we were doing the Mayhem tour in the States [last summer] and Danny [Worsnop] was obviously still our vocalist then. The style of music I was writing was catered towards what Danny was willing to do with his voice, which was a lot less screaming and a lot more rock'n'roll-y. Plus, we were on tour with Avenged Sevenfold, so I'd written a bunch of Avenged Sevenfold rip-off songs. We ended up scrapping most of it and starting again."

IF DENIS IS HAPPIER TO DO THE SCREAMING, DOES THAT MEAN YOU'VE TAKEN A STEP BACK TOWARDS A HEAVIER SOUND?

"Yeah, this album's definitely a lot heavier than [2013's] From Death To Destiny. We've definitely written a lot of heavier tunes, but we've still kept all the melodic aspects of Asking Alexandria that we've had since day one. And I really do think that the biggest arena rock anthems we've ever written are on this record as well. But, for the most part, it is a very heavy record."

DID THE VERY FACT THAT FROM DEATH TO DESTINY WAS SO DIFFERENT SET YOU UP TO BE ABLE TO GO IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS IF YOU CHOSE?

"I think so. From Death To Destiny did open a lot of doors for us and it did go in different directions. It enabled us to explore other avenues that maybe other bands in our genre couldn't necessarily explore as easily as we can at this point. If we'd gone straight from [2009 debut] Stand Up And Scream to an album that had arena rock elements on it, people would have said, 'What the fuck is going on?' But because we slowly did the transition from that to [2011's] Reckless & Relentless, and then to From Death To Destiny, it's enabled us to be able to take the liberty of writing songs a little bit out of our depths, so to speak."

AS WELL AS BEING WILLING TO DO THE SCREAMING, ARE THERE THINGS DENIS HAS BROUGHT VOCALLY THAT DANNY COULDN'T?

"Denis just has a huge range; we explored it and showcased it in I Won't Give In. The kid just has a great singing voice and a whole array of different screams, from yells to growls to highs. He brings a lot to the table and he's willing to explore all those different avenues as well, whereas Danny would just be like, 'Nah, I don't want to scream any more, so we're not gonna do it.' Denis is willing to explore and try different routes, even with things that he didn't used to do so much in the past. He's taken things on board for this record and gone and experimented."

ARE YOU ESSENTIALLY THE MAIN LYRICIST, WITH DENIS PROVIDING HIS OWN INPUT, OR IS IT MORE OF A PARTNERSHIP?

"It's definitely been a partnership. I've sent him a bunch of lyrics, but he's sent me a bunch of lyrics, too. Then when we hit the studio we'd sit down together and go through everything and be like, 'Okay, this needs changing and this could be improved.' Me and Denis have worked really closely on this record. It's been a lot of fun. And it's been a lot easier than previous records because, for the most part, we are on the same page and we have the same ideals. We have the same vision for this band."

Denis got a little carried away when he spied the Mr Whippy van

"WE'VE WRITTEN ONE OF OUR HEAVIEST SONGS EVER"

● BEN BRUCE ●

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT SOME OF THE SONGS ON THE ALBUM?

"I can't give out the album title yet, but there are definitely a few tracks [I can talk about]. We've got an extremely heavy song called Let It Sleep that sort of reminds me of Morte Et Dabo off Reckless & Relentless. It's probably one of the heaviest songs we've ever written as a band. Then we've got a huge arena-rock anthem that we've called Send Me Home. That's just about us being away from home all the time and the struggles and hardships of being away from your loved ones. As great as it is to wake up in a new city every day, it does take its toll."

HAVE YOU GOT A PERSONAL FAVOURITE YET?

"The one that will probably turn out to be my favourite is simply called Black. It's about the end of a relationship, but it's not whiny. It's sort of more about the lead up to the end of the relationship, and realising that what you had was incredible. That's quite a personal song for me, but it's exciting because there's a whole bunch of different styles on this album. We've got a song called Just A Slave To Rock'n'roll, which, in my opinion, is this album's Not The American Average. It's really rocky, pretty old-school Asking Alexandria that's talking about partying, doing drugs and drinking – all that good stuff that we used to sing about."

IS IT DIFFICULT SITTING ON ALL THESE NEW SONGS WAITING FOR PEOPLE TO HEAR THEM?

"It really is. We're still listening to them every night because we're making sure that we're happy with the final mix and seeing if there are any little tweaks to be made at Joey's end regarding the mix and production. We've heard these songs so many times now and no-one else has. I almost wanna just go, 'Fuck it,' and release it online right now. Creating new music is one of my favourite parts of doing all this. If I could, I'd write and release songs every month, but that's just not the way of the beast."

DO YOU THINK THAT ASKING ALEXANDRIA v2.0 IS SET TO SURPASS ANYTHING YOU'VE DONE UP TO NOW?

"I definitely do, because we were in a bit of a rut before with Danny. He didn't want to be in the band and it showed. It took its toll on all of us – not just with the writing, but also touring. It got to the point where it was increasingly difficult to keep up morale and just keep the train going. Now Denis is in the band, we're all happy again, we're all excited, we're all on the same page. Anyone who's seen us live can tell the difference and it shines through the new record, too. It sounds like an Asking Alexandria record. It has that raw aggression and energy that comes from us being excited again, and I think it's captured a lot of that magic and emotion."

NEW ALBUMS ARE LIKE A NEW CHAPTER FOR ANY BAND. DOES THIS ONE FEEL MORE LIKE A NEW BOOK?

"Oh, it feels like a whole new beginning for us – especially with Denis joining the band. It's not just a new record, it really is a new lease of life for Asking Alexandria in general. The band, the press, the tours, the music – everything just feels brand-new. It's nice, because we lost that feeling some time ago and it just feels great to have it rekindled."

ASKING ALEXANDRIA ARE TOURING THE UK RIGHT NOW – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFO

Well, an album will take a long time if you spend all your time building a treehouse, guys… From left: Cameron Liddell (guitar), Denis Stoff (vocals), Sam Bettley (bass), Ben Bruce (guitar) and James Cassells (drums)

MAKING ALEXANDRIA v2.0

BEN BRUCE BREAKS DOWN WHAT'S GONE INTO MAKING THE NEW RECORD…

30% HEAVINESS

"The heavy riffs and the screaming are back, big time. This is a very heavy record. Bringing Denis on board has allowed us to go back to that. I don't feel like we're going back or repeating ourselves. We have taken the vibe of Reckless & Relentless, but it's done with a completely new feel and dynamic."

22% STADIUM ROCK

"We're huge fans of '80s rock like Guns N' Roses and Mötley Crüe. We were listening to Def Leppard a lot and they have all these gang vocals that make you want to sing along. Even on the heavier songs, we made sure that every chorus was huge and memorable and had sections that specifically cater to an audience singing their lungs out."

20% SONGS ABOUT DANNY WORSNOP

"There were originally a lot more, but Denis convinced me to let a lot of that stuff go. There are also a lot of songs that people will assume are about Danny, but they're not. Undivided is one of the songs about that whole thing."

10% ELECTRONICA

"The songs are drenched in electronic elements. There's a lot of ambient and dark electronic sounds and undertones throughout the majority of songs on this record. There's a lot more industrial and aggressive electronics, too."

8% POSITIVITY

"A lot of the songs can be taken in a negative light, but they start off as one thing – talking about something we've been dealing with – and as the song reaches its climax, you realise the tables have turned. A lot of the album takes you towards the light at the end of the tunnel."

10% AA'S SIXTH MEMBER

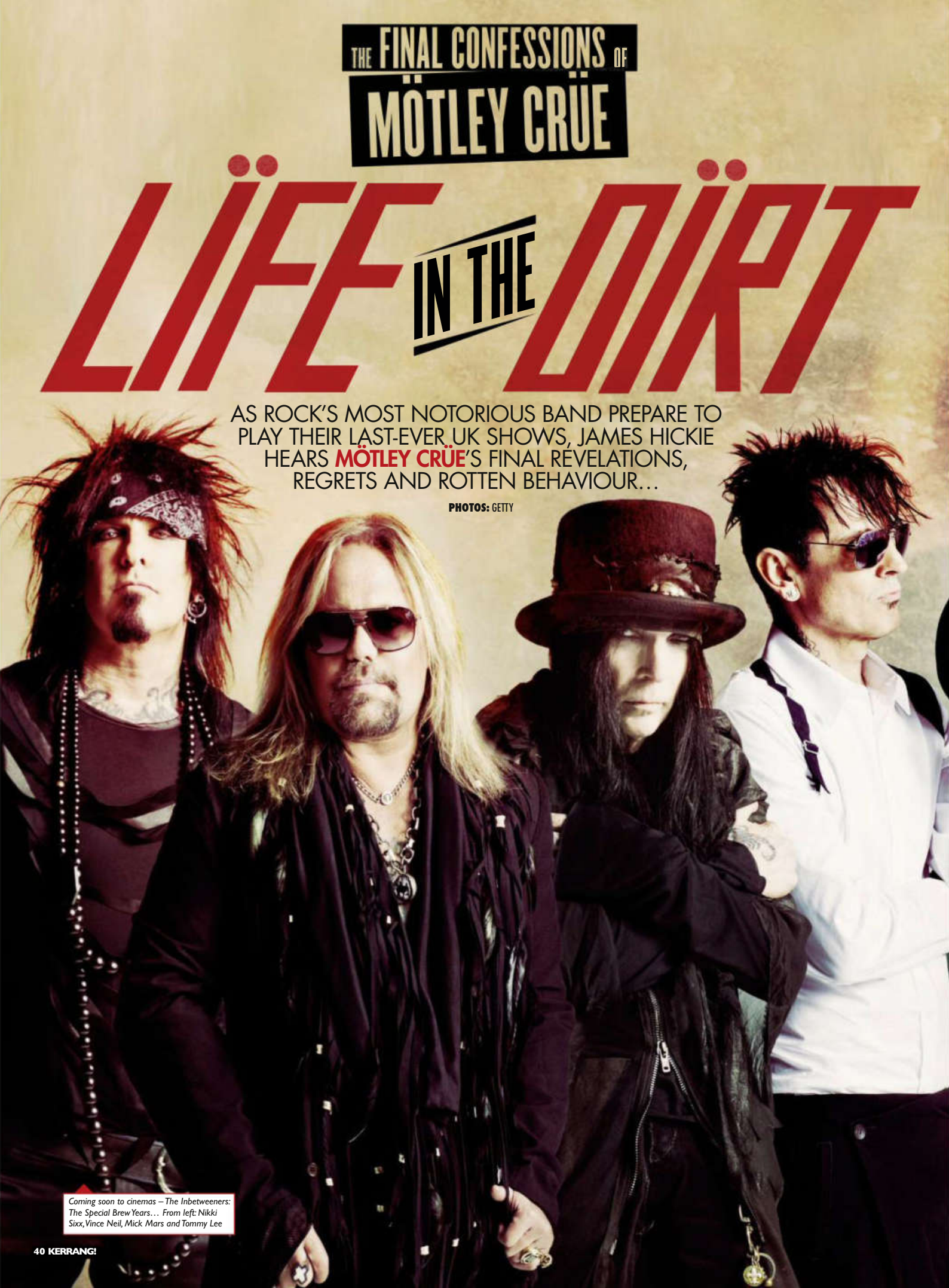
"Our producer, Joey Sturgis, recorded our very first demos. I worked with him when I was 17, and I'm turning 27, so he's been involved in the growth of this band and he's sort of grown with us. It's easy working with him and he can bring ideas to the table already knowing how they'll work for us."

THE FINAL CONFESSIONS OF MÖTLEY CRÜE

LIFE IN THE DIRT

AS ROCK'S MOST NOTORIOUS BAND PREPARE TO PLAY THEIR LAST-EVER UK SHOWS, JAMES HICKIE HEARS **MÖTLEY CRÜE**'S FINAL REVELATIONS, REGRETS AND ROTTEN BEHAVIOUR…

PHOTOS: GETTY



Coming soon to cinemas – The Inbetweeners: The Special Brew Years… From left: Nikki Sixx, Vince Neil, Mick Mars and Tommy Lee

It could spin and fly around all it wants, but Tommy wouldn't be happy until his drum kit could time travel

TOMMY LEE

BIG, BRASH AND MORE THAN A LITTLE HYPERACTIVE, TOMMY LEE HAS EMBODIED THE CRÜE SPIRIT FOR THREE DECADES. IT MAKES HIS SHY, QUIET NATURE IN INTERVIEWS ALL THE MORE SURPRISING…

"WE'RE STILL A BUNCH OF DUDES WHO ARE SHY AND A LITTLE INSECURE"

TOMMY LEE

WHAT WORDS WOULD YOU LIKE ON YOUR OWN TOMBSTONE, AND WHAT WORDS WOULD YOU HAVE ON MÖTLEY CRÜE'S TOMBSTONE?

"Oh, man, that's *really* fucked-up! *I'd* want to be remembered as 'thrill-seeker', plus I'd like to have 'innovator' and 'maniac'. For the band, I'd have 'chameleons', because that's one of the fucking things that's kept us around so long – the fact we've always switched it up just enough so that it's not the same thing. I'd also have 'anthemic' and 'fucking fun'!"

WHEN YOU LOOK BACK, WHAT'S THE ONE MOMENT THAT REALLY DEFINES CRÜE FOR YOU?

"I'm not a big fan of looking backwards. Obviously, at this point we have to look back a bit and say, 'Wow, that was fucking amazing,' but if I'd tried to look for a moment back when we were fucking wasted all the time, I probably wouldn't have fucking remembered anything. I'd pick *right now*, as putting together this insane show for what are to be our final shows is fucking emotional. It makes me realise that we left a serious fucking dent on the music industry."

WHAT STILL EXCITES YOU ABOUT LIFE IN A BAND?

"When people come up to me and say, 'Dude, you guys are the fucking soundtrack to my life,' I get fucking goosebumps. That shit is crazy – that's still monumental to me. This is a really fucking awesome time for me. Yes, it's also sad, but it's not a bummer at all, because it feels like 'mission accomplished' and that we won – because everyone's still fucking alive, which is the craziest part!"

WHAT'S BEEN YOUR UNOFFICIAL ROLE WITHIN THE BAND?

"Me, personally, I'm the first guy to get there in the morning and the last guy to leave at 4am. I'm the one who strives for perfection. I'm the fucking nuts and bolts… I'm the fucking ringleader!"

WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST CRÜE REGRET?

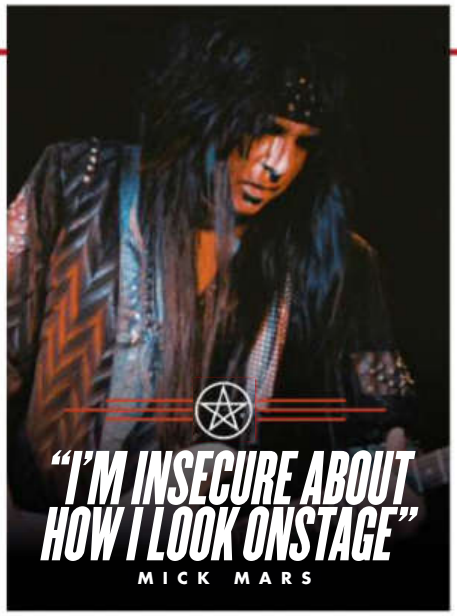
"I remember us being at the Grammys, nominated for Best Rock Album for Dr. Feelgood – alongside Metallica, who were nominated for …And Justice for All. We're all sitting there thinking, 'One of us motherfuckers is walking out of here with a Grammy!' And then the announcer says, 'And the winners are… [now-defunct British prog-rockers] Jethro Tull!' We were all like, 'What the fuck?!' I regret that we didn't win that. However, I know what we've accomplished, so I don't need an award and a pat on the back."

TELL US SOMETHING THAT WOULD SURPRISE PEOPLE ABOUT THE BAND…

"We're still a bunch of dudes who are actually quite shy and a little insecure. I think something like that is much more honest than all the crazy stories. We still sit backstage fucking nervous, like anyone else, which I think trips people out. I always tell myself that the day I'm not nervous is the day I should fuck off and quit, because that means I don't give a fuck any more."

MICK MARS

THE OLDEST MEMBER OF THE BAND, THE AXEMAN IS CONSIDERED THE QUIET ONE, BUT, AS HE REVEALS, HE'S HAD HIS FAIR SHARE OF DEMONS…



WHAT WORDS WOULD YOU LIKE ON YOUR OWN TOMBSTONE, AND WHAT WORDS WOULD YOU HAVE ON MÖTLEY CRÜE'S TOMBSTONE?

"For myself, I would just have 'Dead'. For Mötley Crüe, I'd have, 'Fuck you, we're done,' and have all our hands stuck out of the earth with our middle fingers up."

WHAT'S THE ONE MOMENT THAT TRULY DEFINES MÖTLEY CRÜE FOR YOU?

"I'm not sure it's a memory, it's more of an ethos – and that's that we did whatever the fuck we wanted: music-wise, antics-wise, drug-wise and alcohol-wise."

WHAT'S THE CRÜE SONG THAT YOU WILL MISS PLAYING THE MOST?

"I have the most fun playing Primal Scream [from 1991 compilation Decade Of Decadence 81-91]. I remember coming up with it at rehearsals, and how well it all fitted together. It represented a logical step to a new sound but then, all of a sudden, we made [1997 album] Generation Swine, and I'm like, 'I don't know what the hell to do with this stuff?!'"

WHAT'S THE ONE RECORD IN CRÜE'S DISCOGRAPHY THAT YOU'D ERASE?

"Definitely Generation Swine. It was so far removed from what we do. I think a couple of the guys at that time were influenced by Nine Inch Nails and House Of Pain, and I was going, 'But we're Mötley, we've got our own style.' That album was a real challenge. I'd go home with a stomach ache because I wouldn't know what was expected, or what the rest of the band was hearing in it. It was a good effort, but it failed."

YOU'RE PERCEIVED AS THE BEST-BEHAVED MEMBER OF THE BAND. IS THAT ACCURATE?

"I've *always* been the best-behaved, but you can do stuff on the sly as long as you don't get caught – like putting a shoebox full of shit into the air vent in a hotel. Some of the stuff the other guys did, I would just stay the hell away – it was over the top. I did my fair share of drinking and I did time in prison for misdemeanours, but I never did smack. I learned that when I was much younger, from seeing drugs destroy my heroes."

DID THINGS EVER GET OUT OF CONTROL?

"I got addicted to drugs in the late-'90s when I got A.S. [ankylosing spondylitis, an inflammatory disease that causes the vertebrae to fuse together]. I *had* to do all of these drugs to keep on touring, but the other guys didn't know."

WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED FROM BEING A MEMBER OF THE BAND?

"Probably that I should have been a manager (*laughs*)!"

WHAT'S BEEN YOUR UNOFFICIAL ROLE IN CRÜE?

"I'm the glue. I'm non-confrontational, so when there have been times that I've had to tell other people in the band not to do something, I've had to call up my manager and get them to have those conversations. Boy, that *wasn't* a mistake, but it *was* a mistake. It did help a bit, but it all got out of hand anyway – my intentions were good, though!"

HOW DID HAVING A.S. CHANGE YOUR OUTLOOK ON LIFE?

"I knew I had A.S. before the band. I didn't know how far it was going to go. Usually it stops midway up your spine, but mine goes all the way up to my neck. When I see footage of myself onstage, I look like a stupid fucking mannequin. I'm insecure about it; I don't like the way I look at all. I've shrunk about five inches, I can't drive a car any more, I can't ride a bike, I can barely turn my head. These guys had no clue about it until [2001 autobiography] The Dirt came out. Not being able to do a lot of stuff that I've wanted to do meant I've been able to concentrate on my guitar more."

VINCE NEIL

TWO MEN HAVE FRONTED MÖTLEY CRÜE IN THEIR CAREER, BUT VINCE WAS THE FIRST AND THE BAND'S DEFINITIVE VOICE. HE'S ALSO A RESTAURANTEUR, TEQUILA MANUFACTURER AND… FLORIST?!

WHAT WORDS WOULD YOU LIKE ON YOUR OWN TOMBSTONE, AND ON MÖTLEY CRÜE'S?

"For the band, I'd have, 'We did it our way.' We're stealing it from Frank Sinatra, but it still fits. For me, it'd be, 'Good riddance!' (*laughs*)."

WHAT'S THE ONE MEMORY THAT REALLY SUMS UP MÖTLEY CRÜE?

"For me, it was 1983, the US Festival [festival sponsored by Apple Computer co-founder Steve Wozniak]. It was 360,000 people, so big that you couldn't see any end to the crowd. We were playing with our idols – Van Halen, Ozzy, Scorpions and Judas Priest – and we were playing songs from [then-new album] Shout At The Devil, which people hadn't heard before. That was one of those awe-inspiring moments, where you go, 'This is going to be a good ride!'"

WHAT'S BEEN YOUR UNOFFICIAL ROLE IN MÖTLEY CRÜE?

"Before things go out to the band, Nikki calls me and says, 'What do you think?' and I'll say 'yay' or 'nay'. I'm therefore the consigliere – like the counsellors they have in mafia movies."

WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON THAT MÖTLEY CRÜE HAS TAUGHT YOU?

"That's tough. If a young band were to ask me, I would advise them to play wherever they can. It doesn't matter if it's in front of 10 people in a sandwich shop, or 300,000 people at a festival. As Mötley Crüe, we did both of those. We opened for another band in a sandwich shop, but we still went all-out!"

THE DAY AFTER THE FINAL SHOW, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'LL DO?

"I'll fly home, but I don't think it'll really set in. I think it's going to seem like we are on a long vacation, but this one will be a vacation that never ends. I'll be able to start putting together the things that I've wanted to do. I've got a solo band that I've had for the last 20 years, so I'll be able to put another record out. I'm opening another restaurant in Las Vegas, and a football team. There won't be enough time to think, 'God, I wonder what Mötley Crüe would be doing right now?'"

WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST REGRET WITH THE BAND?

"In terms of a low point, probably the day I was fired from the band [in 1992, before returning in 1997]. When I look back at it now, I don't blame the guys in the band, I blame management, because all they had to do was call up and say, 'Why don't you guys take a week off and get your heads straight?' But no, they just called me that night and said, 'We don't need you any more.'"

WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THAT EXPERIENCE?

"It made me tougher. Plus, right after, I went and got a record deal with Warner Brothers. It made me be more independent and to see that I didn't have to count on the other guys."

TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT A MEMBER OF MÖTLEY CRÜE THAT MIGHT SURPRISE PEOPLE…

"Well, Nikki likes to knit. And I arrange flowers, which is great for a funeral – which this kind of is for the band!"

It would have been easier to just ask someone to fix the light in your dressing room, Nikki…

NIKKI SIXX

THE ONE WHO OVERDOSED ON DRUGS, DIED AND ROSE AGAIN. ALTHOUGH BASSIST NIKKI IS A REHABILITATED FAMILY MAN, HE REMAINS CRÜE'S MOST ROCK'N'ROLL MEMBER…

WHAT WORDS WOULD YOU LIKE ON YOUR OWN TOMBSTONE, AND WHAT WORDS WOULD YOU HAVE ON MÖTLEY CRÜE'S?

"There's so much, I'm not sure you'd be able to get it on a tombstone, because I like to talk and do a lot of editing. I want it chiselled, by the way, by an old Chinese man. For me, I'd have, 'Fuck you, I won. Now I'm done.' And then I'd add 'good luck', because I want to be nice at the end. For Mötley Crüe, I'd have the same, except it would be, 'Fuck you, *we* won.'"

WHAT WAS YOUR PHILOSOPHY FOR THE BAND?

"I wanted to be in either the most *horrible* band or the *greatest* band ever. The only way to do that was to extend faith in anarchy. We did so much shit that we didn't get caught for – like smuggling drugs on private jets – that we felt invincible. Managers would say, 'You can't fucking bite people and send them to hospital,' and I'd say, 'Why not? It's funny!' I love Vince, Tommy and Mick because they were willing to crash and burn – it was like a suicide pact."

HAVE YOU STOPPED BEHAVING LIKE THAT?

"You grow out of that, but you realise that the animal bit is still ticking. A while ago, I was in Australia, and some guy mouthed off, so I knocked him out. My wife goes, 'You can't hit people every time you don't like what they say!' and I said, 'That's what I've always done!'"

WHAT'S BEEN YOUR UNOFFICIAL ROLE IN CRÜE?

"I'm the stable visionary. I've always been the one who says, 'Check this out!' or, 'I read this book and what about this?' Then the guys make magic. I'm usually the person who brings that to the table, which is also a curse for me, because if I'm not writing songs, doing photography or doing radio shows, then I'm knocking people out in hotel lobbies. I'm the *fuel* in the band."

WHAT'S YOUR HIGHEST POINT FOR CRÜE?

"I think it'll be December 31 this year, the final bow [in LA]. We're the original four guys that started this band, and we can look around at the 20,000 people that will be there, and it's going to be like, 'We did it! We crossed the finish line without bursting into flames!'"

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR BIGGEST VICTORY?

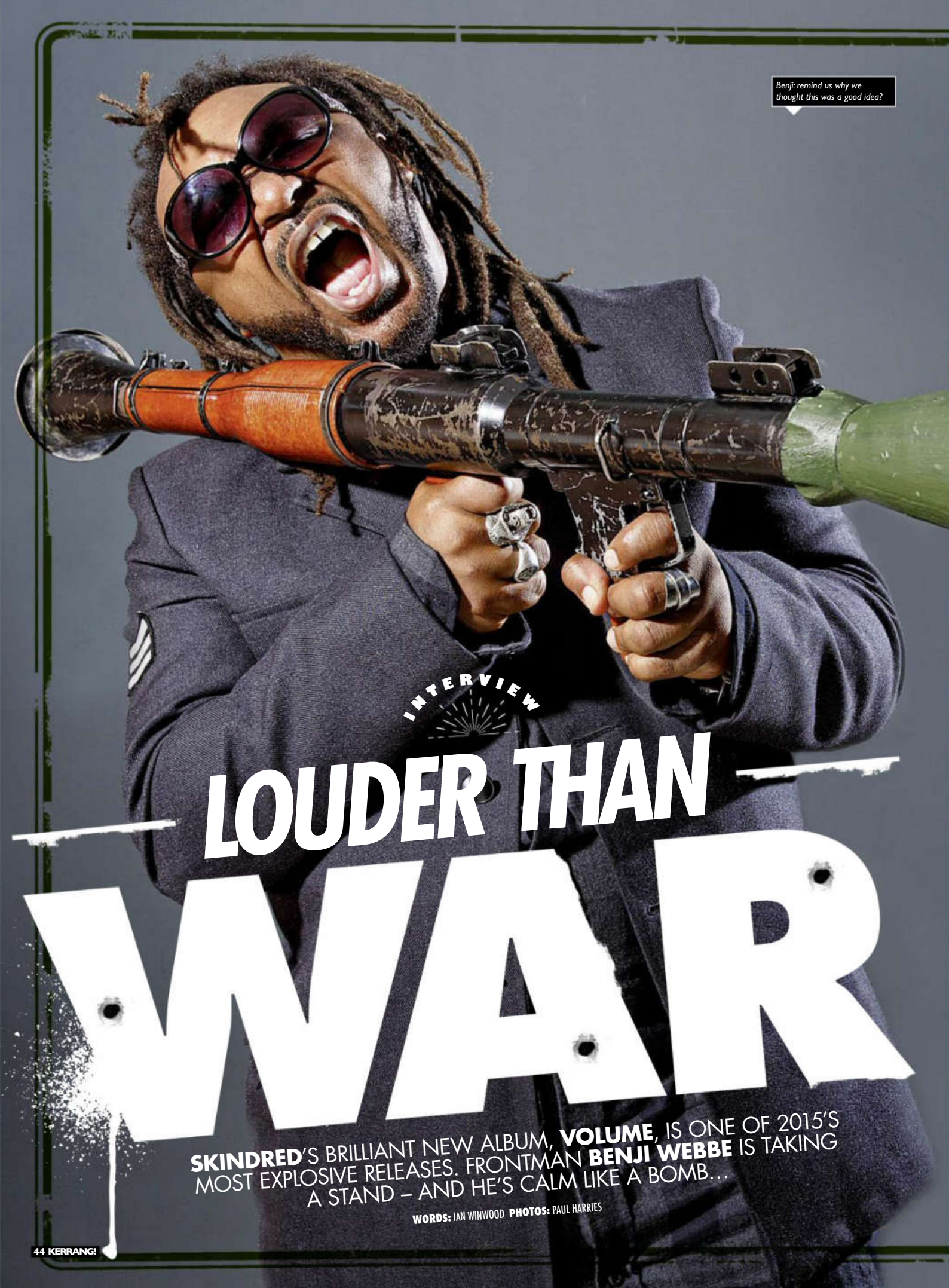
"Having the strength to stand up to corporate America. We stayed true and somehow ended up being a *valuable commodity*. It's funny that the same people that wouldn't sign us to a record deal are now trying to make a movie about us."

DO YOU HAVE A MÖTLEY CRÜE STORY THAT YOU'VE NEVER TOLD ANYONE ELSE?

"I'll file this one under: 'Strangest thing I've ever been asked to autograph'. A girl came up to me in a hotel and said, 'Can I have an autograph?' I said, 'Sure, what would you like me to sign?' so she said, 'My vagina – the inside of it.' That was not easy to do…"

MÖTLEY CRÜE'S THE FINAL TOUR HITS THE UK FROM NOVEMBER 2 – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION

"MANAGERS WOULD SAY, 'YOU CAN'T BITE PEOPLE!' AND I'D SAY, 'WHY NOT?'"
NIKKI SIXX



Benji: remind us why we thought this was a good idea?

INTERVIEW

LOUDER THAN WAR

SKINDRED'S BRILLIANT NEW ALBUM, **VOLUME**, IS ONE OF 2015'S MOST EXPLOSIVE RELEASES. FRONTMAN **BENJI WEBBE** IS TAKING A STAND – AND HE'S CALM LIKE A BOMB…

WORDS: IAN WINWOOD **PHOTOS:** PAUL HARRIES

Benji Webbe looks rather chipper for a man who almost died. This was last month, when he and his partner, Julie, embarked on a holiday to Benji's ancestral home, the West Indies – in this case, Jamaica – from which his father emigrated some 60-odd years ago, just one of many who joined the British workforce as part of Operation Windrush. On the plane, Benji told Julie that he didn't feel so good; Julie told Benji to both man and shut up. But just hours later, she found her fella in bed crippled with pain, his body literally poisoning itself with septicaemia from an infection of the tonsils.

The ambulance that came to transport Benji to the nearest hospital saved his life, which is just as well, as this lift alone cost his insurance company £2,500. For the next seven days, the Skindred frontman swapped hotel room for hospital bed.

Today, sitting at a grand piano that he cannot play – plink, plonk, plank go the keys – at a guitar

show room in Central London where Skindred are playing host for K!, Benji reflects on the experience.

"I'm fucking not going there again," he says.

Benji Webbe's father is West Indian, but he himself is not. This is a crucial point. In the 1970s, comedian Lenny Henry joked that he thought the Conservative Party leader's idea of giving black immigrants thousands of pounds to 'go home' was a good one as the bus to Dudley only cost 20p. Two generations on, Benji Webbe sees not the West Indies but South Wales as constituting the green, green grass of home.

"Being Welsh has made me what I am today," he says. "It comes from being in that multicultural community where everyone is different, but most importantly everyone is the same: we're Welsh. A lot of people look at me doing this reggae-rock thing and put it down to the fact that I'm black. But, to me, I'm doing it because I'm Welsh."

Welsh, yes; but at one step further removed, Benji Webbe is also British; not just by definition, but by exclamation. As if to amplify this point yet further, onstage the 48-year-old Newport-born frontman can often be seen wearing a jacket that sparkles with the pattern of the Union Flag.

"I'm taking the flag back," he says. "And do you know why? Because I wouldn't want to be born anywhere else. I'm proud of being British; I *like* being British."

If you're looking for the themes and tropes that salt and pepper Skindred's music – from 2002's debut album, Babylon, to the joyful juice and jump of the forthcoming Volume set – you can find them above. They comprise defiance, identity, security, belonging and friendship. Benji explains that he "lives in a pretty low-rent part of Newport [Pill]", a place in which "there is always something to write about". Occasionally this canvas is stained by tragedy, such as the death of a close friend described in Saying It Now, a regretful ode that reminds the listener "that if you love someone, you should always tell them you love them". Elsewhere, though, the tone is defiant, more invested in standing one's ground and of refusing to concede defeat.

"I think people can relate to what I write about because they know I'm from the same world," says the frontman. "I'm not talking down to them, or pretending that I understand them when really I don't care. I live in the same kind of community as they do. I understand their troubles. I'm the same as them, and they're the same as me."

"PEOPLE KNOW I'M FROM THE SAME WORLD AS THEM. I UNDERSTAND THEIR TROUBLES"

BENJI WEBBE

The Dog & Duck's door staff were a little heavy-handed (L – R: Mikey Demus, Dan Sturgess, Benji Webbe, Dan Pugsley and Arya Goggin)

As luck would not have it, such tenets describe to precision Skindred's modus operandi. It has been *17 years* since Benji joined forces with bassist Dan Pugsley – the line-up was bolstered by the addition of guitarist Mikey Demus and drummer Arya Goggin in 2002, and DJ Dan Sturgess in 2011 – and gave Skindred a name. As the group roll easily toward their 18th birthday, in their wake lay the corpses of scores of British bands the futures of whom seemed brighter than Skindred's, but whose destinies amounted to failure. All the while today's interviewees kept keeping on, like a well-armoured tortoise in a race for the finish line which lies decades in the future.

"I think it's helped us that we've never blown up suddenly [in terms of popularity]," says Arya Goggin. Like all of his bandmates, the drummer is toweringly likeable. The fact that today he made a cup of tea for this journalist also reveals something about the way Skindred operate. "We've just sailed through; we're not like a household name. But there's been this steady climb, and every year we get to tick off something else from the list of things we want to do. And that keeps it fresh, because we're not getting everything all at once."

This "steady climb" has reached an altitude that will next month see Skindred headline London's O2 Academy Brixton, as much as any room in the capital A Venue Of Legends. The band have reached this station largely under their own steam, without bending their vision to favour passing fads and fashions. Ask Arya Goggin today why it is that his band are still at the table while others have folded, and he will look at you with quiet incredulity before replying…

"Because we believe in what we do."

And so we reach the point at which many bands begin to demure and prevaricate. The question of what level of success musicians happen to have in their sights are thoughts that are usually kept away from the recording devices of music journalists. But here, entirely typically, Skindred are happy to buck the trend.

With his hands, Benji Webbe frames an imaginary poster for a summer music festival. "I want to see an advert for Reading, or for Download, and I want to see our name on the bill written in the font of our actual logo. I want to see our name as it is on our albums, and I want to see it higher up the bill than we've ever been. That's what I want next."

And you want to be one of the bands that gets to play after the sun has set?

"Yeah!" he says, like a child offered an ice cream in the warmth of the seaside. "I want to be a band that plays when it's dark. That's what I want for us."

Benji Webbe and Skindred are taking aim. Run for cover.

VOLUME IS OUT ON OCTOBER 30 VIA NAPALM RECORDS. SKINDRED TOUR THE UK IN NOVEMBER – SEE THE GIG GUIDE

BENJI'S WEB

THE SKINDRED FRONTMAN HAS BEEN PRETTY BUSY OUTSIDE OF HIS DAY JOB…

SOLO PROJECT

WHAT?: Benji turns his hand to matters outside of Skindred.
BENJI SAYS: "When I first started out as a performer, I began by singing reggae. But reggae fucked me over and I couldn't be bothered with it, so I got into playing rock music. And now, years later, I've had the chance to record a reggae album, which is called I Haven't Been Nicking In Ages. That's out there at the moment, and you can get it on iTunes or on Benjiwebbe@bigcartel.com."

DUB WAR

WHAT?: Before – and now, after – Skindred, there was Dub War…
BENJI SAYS: "We've just been jamming and playing the odd show. We've written about six songs as well. But I want that to be fun as well. I want us to play shows, but I want them to be the odd show. The old drummer didn't want to do it no more, so we've got a new drummer from Newport called Mikey Greg – who I call Mikey Gregory Isaacs – and it's just fun. That's what it's meant to be, isn't it – fun."

FILM SOUNDTRACK

WHAT?: Benji reconnects with some old friends.
BENJI SAYS: "[Jazz musician] Jaco Pastorius was the guy who inspired [Metallica's] Rob Trujillo to play bass, so much so that he's made a documentary about him. Anyway, Jaco did a song with [soul legends] Sam & Dave called Come On, Come Over, which Rob got me to sing, and which also features, among others, Flea and Steven Perkins from Jane's Addiction. The song is great, and it should be on the end of the movie."

LIVES

RATINGS

KKKKK = CLASSIC
KKKK = EXCELLENT
KKK = GOOD
KK = AVERAGE
K = POOR

FALL OUT BOY

SSE ARENA WEMBLEY, LONDON. 11.10.15

KKKKK

THE CHICAGO QUARTET LIGHT UP LONDON LIKE THE FOURTH OF JULY

WORDS: JENNYFER J. WALKER **PHOTOS:** PAUL HARRIES

'CHANGE OR DIE' is a phrase popular with business analysts, heart surgeons and also Fall Out Boy. "The whole point of Save Rock And Roll was saying that rock is going to die if it doesn't change," frontman Patrick Stump told us back in February. "If it doesn't accept that there's a future, and only looks at the past, it will be totally irrelevant."

The Chicagoans proved the spirit of rock'n'roll isn't limited to, well, rock bands first by doing a tour with rap-man Wiz Khalifa in the States, and now, on this UK run buy bringing along Charley Marley (the latest rap signing to Pete Wentz' DCD2 label), alt.dance duo Matt And Kim, plus London rapper Professor Green (a decision some Twitterati blasted as "sickening").

What you think of FOB's choice in tour supports is irrelevant, though, as they're not a band who need any. Point proved as they launch into Sugar, We're Goin Down and Patrick doesn't bother singing the opening lines because the crowd do it for him. Chat is kept to a minimum as the foursome blast through tune after tune – Irresistible, The Phoenix, I Slept With Someone In Fall Out Boy… – all played out in front of a video screen the size of a semidetached house, showcasing animated art for each song. There's everything from poo and diamond emojis during Thriller, to majestic roaring lions for Centuries.

The night's only breathers come during a brief B-stage acoustic set, followed by an Andy Hurley drum solo sampling Game Of Thrones, which is *bad-ass*. And, once people actually start passing out from the heat (there's enough pyro in Wembley tonight to make Guy Fawkes mess his pants), a concerned Pete deliberately slows the set down with a soothing rendition of Jet Pack Blues – a track alternated at preview shows with Fourth Of July.

The final 30 minutes are much like a firework display on said American holiday, with bangers firing off in every direction – Uma Thurman brings a Tarantino-style blood-splattered dance party, while the burlesque-themed Thnks Fr Th Mmrs gets *everybody* on their feet clapping. The show as a whole is simply bedazzling. And with Joe Trohman's guitars set to 'fucking loud', it's undeniably rock'n'roll.

Fall Out Boy playing two arenas in the same city for the first time is a clear triumph (they rocked Wembley again the night after), but where do they go from here? The clue lies in Centuries and My Songs Know What You Did In The Dark – two tracks so monumental, they prove the quartet are more than a two-night arena band – they might just make it to stadium status. And, at the very least, UK festival headliners. Reading & Leeds, take note.

Ladies and gentlemen… HATRICK STUMP!

Secret drum iPads: a bad idea when watching GOT

STAR SHOUT!

PETE WENTZ

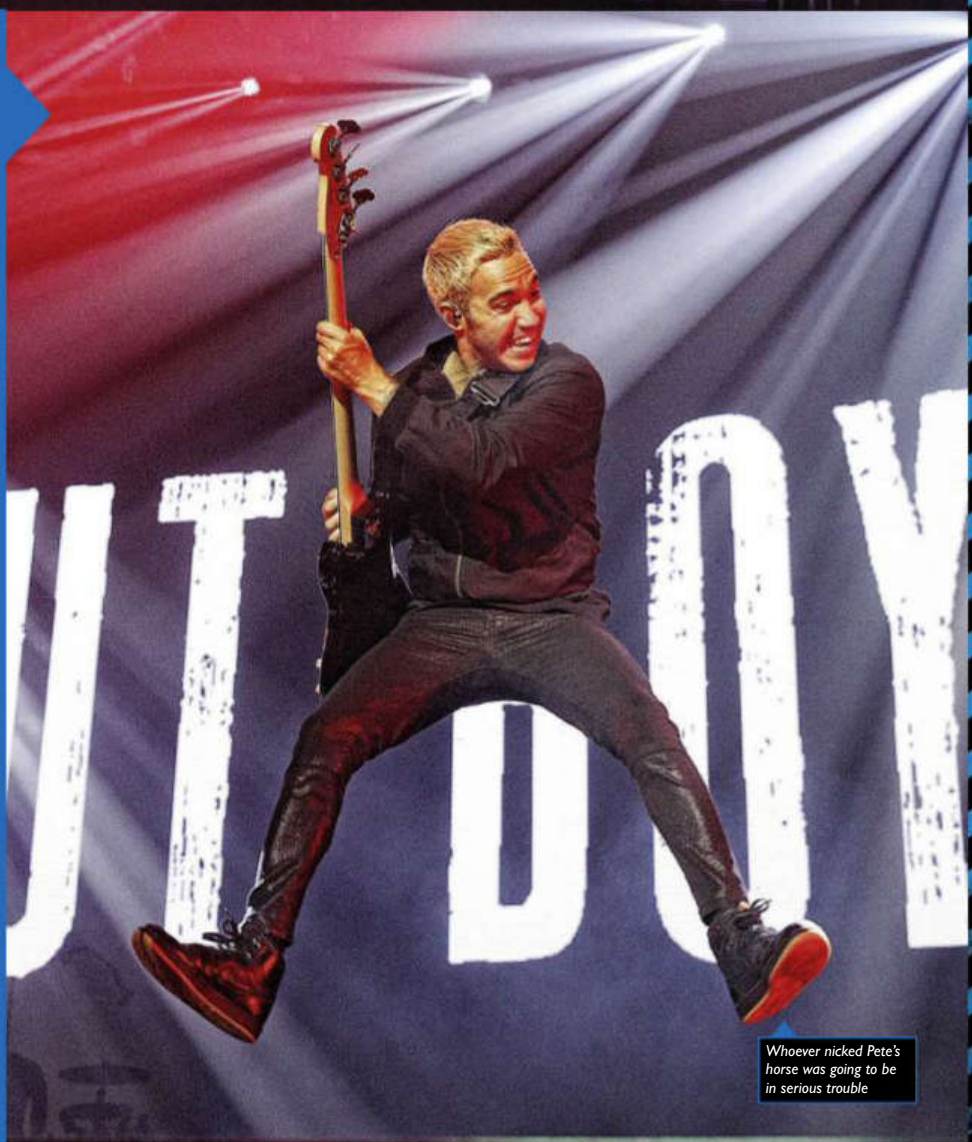
(BASS)

TELL US ABOUT THE SHOW'S VIDEOS...

"To me, every song has a visual. When we played The Phoenix before, it's companion was fighter jets, and this time it's jellyfish. I think they represent two very similar kinds of things – I always think about jellyfish and the way they don't sting other jellyfish, and it made sense for The Phoenix. We brought out some new ones for the UK, like for Jet Pack Blues we made a nod to the reference of Pacific Rim inside of it. If we're gonna play in front of 18,000 people, you have to give the person that's in seat one million F something to partake in the show, or else we should just be playing in clubs otherwise."

YOU SAID YOU WERE HOLDING THE AFTERPARTY AT NANDO'S – DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH CHILLIS ON YOUR CARD FOR THE WHOLE OF WEMBLEY?

"(*Laughs*) Probably not, no. But I did have an afterparty with some Nando's. My order is usually a Medium half chicken and corn. I had a little chicken wrap last night, which was good. I don't have Nando's by me, so it's pretty rad."



Whoever nicked Pete's horse was going to be in serious trouble

Chrissy regretted wiping her face after mending her bike

STAR SHOUT!
CHRISSY COSTANZA
(VOCALS)

WAS THE AMERICAN IDIOT COVER AS SPONTANEOUS AS IT LOOKED?
"Yeah! The crowd always sing and they have fun, so we just throw it in the set when we feel like it."

YOU FILMED THE OUTSIDERS VIDEO TONIGHT. CAN AN EX-CHEERLEADER BE AN OUTSIDER?
"I was a cheerleader for, like, a minute! I don't have many friends now! I talk to my dog on Facetime a lot, though!"

AGAINST THE CURRENT

O2 ACADEMY ISLINGTON, LONDON. 07.10.15

KKKKK

SOMEONE CALL NASA: A STAR IS BORN AS U.S. POP-ROCKERS SMASH LONDON

WORDS: MARK SUTHERLAND **PHOTOS:** IAN COLLINS

■ "MY MANAGER'S words before going onstage tonight were, 'Go be a bad bitch!'" hollers Against The Current frontwoman Chrissy Costanza through a bout of cold. "I'm a hard motherfucker, alright?"

Chrissy may struggle to meet the minimum height restriction on theme park rides but, on tonight's form, no-one would mess with her. Her irrepressible pep is certainly the rocket fuel sending ATC supernova. Usually, a band's first big London headline show involves having to win people over. Not tonight. The show is sold-out, mainly with fans so young CBBC's ratings surely take a big hit this evening. Many of them are daubed with the same 'outsiders' warpaint that Chrissy is wearing. All greet the band's arrival – hammering out the Paramore-meets-Katy-Perry strut of Talk – with screams that could cause tinnitus as far away as Manchester.

And there's plenty more where that came from. ATC have so many pop-punk bangers (Paralyzed, Gravity, Fireproof) that, one day, they'll surely have an entire Teenage Dirtbags compilation to themselves. And possibly an entire Punk Goes Pop, too, judging by a slick version of The 1975's Chocolate, and a rather-less-rehearsed take on Green Day's American Idiot.

Only new single Outsiders – for which they film the video tonight – doesn't fully convince, and that's mainly because if Against The Current ever were outsiders, they clearly won't be for long. Superstardom awaits, and anyone who has a problem with that is hereby advised to get the hell out of Chrissy's way.

No matter how hard she tried, Chrissy just couldn't reach that itch

URFAUST

PLUS: CNOC AN TURSA, SAOR

FELL FOOT WOOD, CUMBRIA. 02 – 03.10.15

KKKK

DUTCH BLACK METALLERS DELIVER TOTAL DARKNESS TO THE LAKE DISTRICT

■ HILL WALKING. Steamboat tours. Blood-curdling black metal. You can get up to anything on a weekend in the Lake District. Yep, a swathe of the UK's grimmest punters have descended on the shores of Lake Windermere for the annual Blackwood Gathering to see a fistful of bands that practically guarantee a frostbitten end to the Indian summer. Atmosphere-soaked Scots Saor close Friday night with the blinding density of an onrushing fog, while their countrymen in Cnoc An Tursa boot Saturday up the arse with their folk-infused Celtic attack. Still, its Holland's lesser-spotted underground heroes Urfaust who've really got the kvlt crew sweating off their corpsepaint. With a crowd spilling from the shed stage past the firepit and into the trees, their layers upon layers of crashing riffage and the odd demented shriek mightn't please the local wildlife, but the congregation roar their approval. With sprawling scope, intricate textures and a vocal delivery that transcends conventional black metal boundaries at will, Urfaust will never play anywhere as appropriate as this again. The beer and banter might be flowing freely as everyone freewheels past midnight, but that gushing about "woodland majesty" and "dark grandeur" is anything but piss-talk.

SAM LAW

STEVEN WILSON

PLUS: MATT BERRY & THE MAYPOLES

ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON. 29.09.15

KKKK

BRITISH PROG HERO BRINGS THE (WEIRD) NOISE TO THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL

■ TO MANY, Steven Wilson will always be the brains behind UK atmospheric rockers Porcupine Tree, or the bloke that produced Blackwater Park – the album that broke Opeth. But, in truth, he's more successful now than he's ever been – performing two career-spanning headline shows in one of London's most prestigious music halls. First up, though, is TV comic Matt Berry, who prattles around onstage like he's hanging out in his living room, occasionally making weird noises with his synth and that signature is-he-the-son-of-Brian-Blessed? voice. "I want to dedicate this song to Clem Fandango," bellows the BAFTA-winning funnyman, before launching into Toast Of London theme tune Take My Hand and plugging the impending third series. Bizarre behaviour as usual, then, but you just can't help but love the guy. And the same goes for Steven Wilson – the man can do no wrong. His take on progressive music is as euphoric as it is unsettling, with a revolving door of guests joining him for tracks old and new. The first performance featured Opeth's Mikael Åkerfeldt creep up for Drag Ropes – marking the live debut of their Storm Corrosion side-project – while tonight witnesses one-time Dizzee Rascal axeman (yes, really) Guthrie Govan melt faces with some of the most stunning guitar work this side of Eddie Van Halen. And, finally, the set culminates with Porcupine Tree drummer Gavin Harrison coming out for old favourites Dark Matter and The Sound Of Muzak. The prog poster boy seems to have not aged a single day throughout the decades and – as tonight proves – neither has his music.

AMIT SHARMA

NORTHLANE

PLUS: VOLUMES, THE ACACIA STRAIN, HELLIONS

02 ISLINGTON ACADEMY, LONDON. 08.10.15

KKKK

AUSSIE MARAUDERS CLEAN UP THE CAPITAL WITH THEIR RIGHTEOUS RIFFOLA

THERE ARE few bands operating in metalcore's oft-knuckleheaded heavier lane with the clarity and purity that New South Wales' Northlane so evidently aspire to. Their philosophically guided overtones add enough layers of emotional intrigue to their technical noise for tonight to feel like a genuinely special evening in the making. Openers Hellions set the tone, marking a first UK visit for the Best International Newcomer Kerrang! Award nominees with a thrillingly ramshackle introduction. The Acacia Strain provide a spot of brutality, before Volumes take a tack more akin to the headliners. Resplendent in all-white, they wrestle out their knotty, dense jams which touch on everything from post-rock to nu-metal to a crowd who lap up every last bit. It's Northlane's arrival which elevates us onto a different plane, though. Their swelling riffs feel like a down-tuned heartbeat from the get-go, and a light show fit for an arena accompanies recent big-hitters Leech and Rot to wondrous effect. In truth, the young quintet are still working to regain some lost momentum following the departure of original vocalist Adrian Fitipaldes, and the response to older cuts Scarab and Quantum Flux are roof-caving highlights that the rest of the set struggles to compete with. Yet, as Adrian's successor, Marcus Bridge, thanks the crowd with an un-fakeable sincerity during a sweat-swamped encore, there is the sense that both he and the band around him are continuing to grow into something of true, pure, crystalline beauty.

TOMAS DOYLE

BLITZ KIDS

PLUS: VERSES, HINDSIGHTS

TUFNELL PARK DOME, LONDON. 10.10.15

KKKKK

BWAAAAAAAA! TIME FOR TEARS AT BRIT-ROCKERS' FINAL SHOW

Joe James cried all the tears out of his body

"ARE YOU going to make this the best show we've ever played?" asks Blitz Kids frontman Joe James, midway through their final-ever show. A roar comes back. "Are you going to make us cry?" A bigger roar follows. He grins, "You sick fucks!" Endearing humour and euphoric tunes is what we loved about Blitz Kids, and, sad as this night is, spirits are still running high.

Kicking off with lung-busting vocals and big, shiny rock, Hindsights win over the crowd early, while Verses pack a slick yet impassioned set of frantic riffs with instantly singable choruses. But, of course, tonight is all about the grand finalé, and the arrival of Blitz Kids sees band and crowd alike get swept up in a tidal wave of emotion.

Strangers With Memories and Keep Swinging sound majestic but, as the set progresses, the gravity of the situation sets in, with usually cocky guitarist Jono Yates visibly choking up. Fittingly, Never Die poignantly closes the night with a sing-along that nearly blows the roof off.

It's sad, but in some way, shape or form, they'll be back. So long, Kids, and thanks for all the Blitz.

STAR SHOUT!

JONO YATES

(GUITAR)

THAT GOT PRETTY EMOTIONAL. WERE THERE ANY SONGS YOU FOUND DIFFICULT TO PLAY TONIGHT?

"Mainly the last three songs. I mean, after every song I wasn't really thinking, 'Oh, this is the last time I'm ever going to play this.' But, the closer to the end we got, I realised this was it, and I think everyone kind of sensed that."

WEREN'T YOU EXPECTING THAT?

"I wasn't expecting it at all! I did not expect to cry. I just thought, 'Nah! I'll just go offstage, get pissed and it'll be fine.' But, it was really, really fucking intense!"

WORDS: JAMES MACKINNON **PHOTOS:** ANDREW TIMMS

STATE CHAMPS

PLUS: KNUCKLE PUCK, ROAM

STYLUS, LEEDS. 22.09.15

KKKK

POP-PUNK'S BRIGHTEST NEW STARS SHINE IN THE NORTH

WORDS: PAUL TRAVERS **PHOTOS:** ANDY GALLAGHER

IF ANYONE still needs convincing that pop-punk's not dead, tonight's show – and every other stop on this sold-out tour – could be Exhibit A. With a new generation of bands led by the likes of State Champs and our own Neck Deep, we're currently being shown almost weekly that the future of the scene is in very safe hands.

Eastbourne's own ROAM are busy staking their own claim, with a sound that matches the energy but ups the aggression compared to the average bunch of pop-punkers. They're not Black Flag, but that slightly raw hardcore edge invigorates the already irresistible bounce of songs like Head Rush. Expect to see a lot more from these guys. And Knuckle Puck, for that matter. Their tongue-in-cheek "Fuck homework" chant might fall flat, but their heartfelt anthems cause minor mayhem tonight.

It's all eclipsed by the response to the headliners, however. As a constant tide of crowd-surfers surge forward to get closer to the band while belting every word to every song (including the newer likes of All You Are Is History and Secrets), State Champs certainly don't have the air of a band only playing their debut UK headlining tour. The audience adds its own energy, breaking into chants like a well-drilled football crowd, and the band up their game accordingly. It's a big, sticky love-in of a show with a highly infectious soundtrack. State Champs' first UK headlining jaunt can only be seen as a total victory.

STAR SHOUT!

DEREK DiSCANIO

(VOCALS)

YOU WERE AWARE THE CROWD WERE CHANTING 'YORKSHIRE!' AND NOT 'YOU'RE SHIT!', RIGHT?

"We thought that the first time we came here (*laughs*). It's our third time now, so we were taking bets on how many songs it would be before the 'Yorkshire!' chant came out!"

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO COME 3,000 MILES AND HAVE EVERYONE SINGING ALONG?

"It's amazing! When we came before, it was very much an introduction and all we hoped was that some of the people who saw us then would come back again. To come and play sold-out shows and have people singing back is crazy to us, and a big tick off our bucket list."

Invisible exercise bikes: Xmas 2015's pop-punk must-have

REVIEWS

RATINGS
KKKKK = CLASSIC
KKKK = EXCELLENT
KKK = GOOD
KK = AVERAGE
K = POOR

ESCAPE THE FATE

HATE ME *(ELEVEN SEVEN)*

KKK

REJUVENATED POST-HARDCORE HELL-RAISERS FLIP TWO FINGERS TO THE CYNICS WITH DEFIANT FIFTH LP

HATERS GONNA hate… It's hardly a revelation, you'd imagine, for a band like Escape The Fate. The sleaze-goth look. The mosh-pop sound. The historic links with a world-class derision-magnet like Ronnie Radke. If the Vegas quartet were deliberately trolling the internet's scowling keyboard-scenesters, they'd have to pull something truly special to outdo existing accomplishments.

Thing is, they're not trolling. Not even close. Craig Mabbitt and co take their sound – and their fans – very seriously indeed. And though personnel disruption could've derailed Hate Me (both founding guitarist Monte Money and his axeman brother Michael walking away), it's instead led to realignment (Kevin "Thrasher" Gruft and TJ Bell stepping into the breach) and a galvanised embrace of naysayers' contempt; using that to fuel the fires of rebirth.

They're unconstrained. Unconcerned. Uninhibited. Unsurprisingly, they still sound seriously like the Escape The Fate you already love/hate. The riffage: snarling away with guard-dog reliability. The solos: spiralling off with the pyrotechnic showiness of New Year's Eve. The vocals: custom-cut to be punched back stageward by inevitably packed rooms. Even Howard Benson's (MCR, Bon Jovi) top-dollar production: gleaming with stadium sheen rather than gutter-club cutting-edge. There's just more now. More passion. More drive. More fun.

Live For Today toys with industrial chug before jackknifing into a dancefloor-rocker that'd have dead bodies busting moves. Remember Every Scar strives and soars with heartfelt, anthemic defiance. I Won't Break veers between knuckledusted fury and black-eyed swagger. Yet it's the record's contrasting bookends that set the bar. Just A Memory opens up, avalanching with demolition-derby riffage, lung-ripping gang vocals and fist-flinging breakdowns, while Let Me Be pops a thoroughly unexpected closing cork with the sort of joyous '*Woah-oh-oh*' pop-rock ebullience that'd do 5 Seconds Of Summer proud.

It's not all gravy, mind. Improvements are subtle, and although the dynamism's impressively dextrous, true unpredictability remains off limits. Craig's lyrics still sporadically flow like the unrefined effluence of a youth immediately post-Xbox-confiscation. And the refusal to swap out a few more leaden beatdowns for moments of lightweight vibrancy is a stubborn mistake.

Crucially, though, Hate Me is a record with the courage of its convictions. The punches land. The hooks catch. The sparks of defiance burst into a glaringly affirmative conflagration. So, hate if you will, just know that when you do, Escape The Fate'll still be here, playing back that little bit harder because of it.

DOWNLOAD: Alive, Remember Every Scar.
FOR FANS OF: Pierce The Veil, Papa Roach.
SAM LAW

"WE WERE READY TO CALL IT QUITS..."
CRAIG MABBITT

TRACK BY TRACK

DEF LEPPARD

DEF LEPPARD *(EARMUSIC)*

KKKK

THE ORIGINAL MASSIVE BAND FROM SHEFFIELD CONTINUE TO SPARKLE ON ALBUM NUMBER 11

1 LET'S GO
'Do you really, really wanna do this now?' Yes we do. Because it's always rock o' clock in Def Leppard world, and after seven years, it's about time the Sheffield superstars released a new album. Good news: it opens with a riff so shiny, singer Joe Elliott could use it as a mirror.

2 DANGEROUS
It's about as dangerous as swimming 10 minutes after eating, but the sticky-sweet chorus is deadly.

3 MAN ENOUGH
Oh, that is a rude, rude bassline there. Struts like a cheeky schoolboy, it does.

4 WE BELONG
Ah, power ballad. Can't. Keep. Lighter. In. Pocket… Must. Hold. It. Aloft…

5 INVINCIBLE
Driving up the M1 on a wet Monday morning? Slip this on – HEY PRESTO! – you're in a muscle car on Route 66.

6 SEA OF LOVE
Shiny blues and a massive gospel bit!

7 ENERGIZED
Electronic drums and keyboards. Ironically, the first dip in power.

8 ALL TIME HIGH
That's more like it – stadium-shagging rock'n'roll. Although, despite the title, they're not putting Alex Gaskarth on blast here.

9 BATTLE OF MY OWN
Even on acoustic guitars, Lepp sound bigger than most bands at full whack. Truth.

10 BROKE 'N' BROKENHEARTED
Def Leppard have sold over 100 million albums. Thus, one half of this title is a whopping lie. For shame.

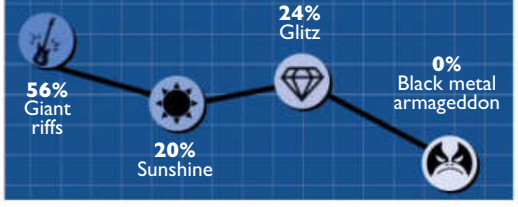
11 FOREVER YOUNG
Hmm. Foot off the gas a bit here. But not as bad as the shocking Mel Gibson flick of the same name.

12 LAST DANCE
Keeping to their EU quota of power ballads, here's another soppy strummer.

13 WINGS OF AN ANGEL
Like an echo of their classic Photograph. Big riff. Again.

14 BLIND FAITH
And here we close on another soaring ballad that climaxes massively. It all adds to the case that Lepp remain rock's biggest, baddest, glitteriest band. Never change that, lads.

THIS ALBUM IS MOSTLY MADE UP OF...



WORDS: NICK RUSKELL

THE INSIDER
CRAIG MABBITT
(VOCALS)

EMBRACING THE HATE'S A BOLD CONCEPT. HOW MUCH DID IT INSPIRE YOU?
"It's come from years and years and years of that – the long term. And you just can't live your life focused on the negativity. You're gonna get negative, and you're gonna get negative results. This was a turning point for me and the band leaving that negativity behind. Leaving it in the past. Leaving it as just a memory. Then changing it up and realising that no matter how many negative things there are, there's still a light in the dark – then finding it. That's what's Hate Me's about."

WHAT WAS THAT LIGHT IN THE DARK FOR YOU?
"It was that culmination of everything we've been through. Everything that could break up a band. It got to a point where it was just me and Robert [Ortiz, drums] sitting there alone on a tour bus. It got real low. It felt so broken-down. And we were still on tour! But we reached a realisation that it wasn't that bad. We can still do what we want to do. And our fans are still sticking with us. If anything, we were getting ready to call it quits. But the fans really pushed us on through to do another album."

WHAT HAVE THE NEW GUYS BROUGHT TO THE TABLE?
"Even before we get onstage every night there's positive vibes and friendship. They really brought that to the table. And common sense! But some of the simplest things, when they don't happen, it seems like the greatest thing when they do start happening again. It's humbling and really puts you in a better mood."

FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS

BRUISES *(GOREMOUNT)*

KKKK

FORMER KINGS OF NEW GRAVE REANIMATE AND UNDERTAKE A SERIOUS REVAMP

PERHAPS VICTIMS of their own ambition, Fearless Vampire Killers' dedication to creating an inclusive fictional world for their music – through novels, comic books and online forums – while impressive, always seemed to distract from the music itself. With mini-album Bruises, the message from FVK is that with the Grandomina concept now complete, the band can now focus on rawer, real-life grievances. But, in truth, it's the songwriting that benefits most from this redefinition. That shoot-for-the-moon creativity has been melted down and poured into moments like the gloriously sinister grooves of Regret, while Like Bruises sees the theatrical make-up grab an extra handful of brains. A regeneration worth monitoring.

DOWNLOAD: Regret.
FOR FANS OF: AFI, Mallory Knox.
TOM SHEPHERD

THE FRONT BOTTOMS

BACK ON TOP *(FUELED BY RAMEN)*

KKKK

ODDBALL INDIE PUNKS GET (SORT OF) SERIOUS ON FIFTH ALBUM

PLAYING SAD songs with a comedy name is officially *nobody's* recipe for success, but The Front Bottoms are, er, playing no bum notes here. Their major-label debut introduces itself with a glossy production job, a weak opening track (Motorcycle) and replaces their raw acoustic charm with something slicker. Thankfully, things quickly improve, powered by frontman Brian Sella's trademark blend of humour and despair: '*I'm always focusing in on the wrong thing / And then the wrong things become everything*', he sighs on Help. Not true. Back On Top never loses sight of something very important: trying something new. Check 'em out if you haven't already.

DOWNLOAD: Help.
FOR FANS OF: Weezer, Jimmy Eat World.
ALISTAIR LAWRENCE

ZEPHYR

AN ODYSSEY FOR THE LIVING *(SELF-RELEASE)*

KKK

BREEZY DEBUT EP FROM MELODIC LONDON TECH-METALHEADS

AS A zephyr is a mild breeze, you might think it a rather unsuitable choice of moniker for an up-and-coming tech-metal outfit. There's certainly little mild about this London quartet's juddering metalcore riffs, while vocalist Cameron Alexander Thomson possesses a gale-force growl. However, there is something pleasingly airy in the cloudbursting sound of this debut EP, with melodic guitar lines and layers of dynamics soaring into the atmosphere. At their best, as on Little Lamplight or Black Luster, Zephyr are capable of memorable songs which cannily balance moshability with graceful tunefulness. Get in at the start of their Odyssey.

DOWNLOAD: Little Lamplight.
FOR FANS OF: Architects, Periphery.
OLLY THOMAS

LYRIC OF THE WEEK

'I'll turn to something you won't like'. So, here we are, Ash Costello is revealing her magic powers. She can turn herself into a tax return, a plate of liver and onions, or Nigel Farage, depending on her enemy. Clearly, we wouldn't like her when she's angry.
BAND: New Years Day
SONG: I'm About To Break You
ALBUM: Malevolence

SLEEVE OF THE WEEK

Nobody seems to have told Australian black-metallers Midnight Odyssey that you don't really get glaciers in space. Water would freeze, of course, but there's none up there. So, this cover is a TOTAL AND UTTER LIE.

VIDEO OF THE WEEK

FISH ON, LINDEMANN
Confused by the weird, hairy onion beast in this still? That's the thin end of the wedge. Wait 'til you see them marauding through the woods after naked cavewomen, while Till Lindemann from Rammstein goes fishing. Weird.

MICHAEL MONROE

BLACKOUT STATES *(SPINEFARM)*

KKKK

EX-HANOI ROCKS ICON OFFERS YOUNG PUPS A ROCK'N'ROLL EDUCATION

YOUR NEWFANGLED Hoover might be light, eco-friendly and all that crap, but that old brush you've had for years is the only thing that's gonna get into the corners, right? Well, this old brush Michael Monroe has been in and out of a few crevices himself over the years, but even at the age of 53, his rock continues to sweep new pretenders away. This jubilant battering of punky riffs, sneering vocals and killer hooks is magic The Bastard's Bash tops the lot, but elsewhere it stands toe-to-toe with the excellent Biters and easily bests the likes of Backyard Babies. Monroe's a proper rockstar, and here he shows you why.

DOWNLOAD: The Bastard's Bash.
FOR FANS OF: Aerosmith, Biters.
STEVE BEEBEE

ECHOIC

TESTIFY *(SELF-RELEASE)*

KKK

AMBITIOUS READING QUARTET PREACH TO THE ALT.ROCK CHOIR ON DEBUT

MOST BANDS' first offerings stick to tried-and-trusted formulas: riff-chorus-riff-WOAHWOAH-solo. So far, so alt.rock. And while there's a bit of that here, Echoic also differ with some unexpected detours on their first EP. For instance, the title-track's frantic guitar stabs and squeezed vocals give way to a gloriously spaced-out break right where you expect guitar-mangling, while Keep Me Warm is a golden nugget of marshmallowy acoustic pop set amidst the rockers. But it's the impossibly funky stylings of My Mind, with its choruses aimed sky high, that will no doubt have crowds singing their praises before long.

DOWNLOAD: My Mind.
FOR FANS OF: Mallory Knox, Young Guns.
JAMES MACKINNON

WITH THE DEAD

WITH THE DEAD *(RISE ABOVE)*

KKKK

BRIT DOOM SUPERGROUP BLOT OUT THE LIGHT ON CRUSHING DEBUT

LOOKING FOR unspeakable heaviosity? Cathedral legend Lee Dorrian's yer man. But what happens when you drop ex-Electric Wizard duo Tim Bagshaw and Mark Greening into the mix, too? Some kind of lightless, hyper-dense doom-metal singularity?! Well, *almost* impossible as it seems, With The Dead actually punch above their suffocating weight with a serrated brand of inky blackness that mixes a little of Lee's grinding roots amongst the trio's doom-laden pedigree. Cheerily titled ditties like Crown Of Burning Stars and Screams From My Own Grave mightn't be much for multidimensional experimentation. But they'll stove in your skull like a gravedigger's spade.

DOWNLOAD: The Cross, I Am The Virus.
FOR FANS OF: Cathedral, Ramesses.
SAM LAW

NOTHING BUT THIEVES

NOTHING BUT THIEVES *(RCA)*

KKK

ESSEX ALT.INDIE KIDS PROVE THAT STYLE (SOMETIMES) EQUALS SUBSTANCE

SOMETIMES YOU don't need to be rocked by a hurricane. Sometimes a nice refreshing breeze will do just fine. Upon such logic rests Nothing But Thieves' beguilingly insubstantial debut. Built around Conor Mason's stunning vocals (think Matt Bellamy or Keith Buckley with an erratic transatlantic accent borrowed off The Killers' Brandon Flowers), tracks like Excuse Me and (the, frankly, pessimistically titled) Ban All The Music mightn't carry much heft. But the Southend-on-Sea quintet's ability to channel influences as disparate as Arcade Fire's anthemic indie, Led Zeppelin's swaggering sprawl and the

WITH THIS being our Guitar Heroes issue, we've gone mad for two things this week: guitars and video games. Happily, we've got the new **GUITAR HERO LIVE (KKKKK)** game to scratch both equally virulent, but differently shaped, itches. Revamping the 10-year-old classic, the fundamental tenet of the game remains the same – strum along, don't be shit – but this time around, it's harder. With six buttons on your controls rather than the previous five, there's more skillz to use, and

ON THE STEREO

1 ISSUES – THE REALEST
After all those rotten R&B EPs, Tyler Carter's gone back to full-on nu-metal chug for Issues' new stuff. Good.

2 DEVIL YOU KNOW – THE WAY WE DIE
Former Killswitch Engage cat Howard Jones returns once more. And would you Adam-and-Eve it, it's heavy as hell!

3 FIGHTSTAR – OVERDRIVE
Another belting hardcore cut from Fightstar's stonking new album. Like Deftones with extra heaviness.

4 THE GHOST INSIDE – MOVE ME
Fuckin' right – total metalcore bum-kicking right here. Ace.

5 SKINDRED – VOLUME
Not even Niagara Falls has as much flow as Benji Webbe. Just check this out – like a gushing river of rap.

atmospheric soundtracks of Hans Zimmer demands extra marks for effort.
DOWNLOAD: Itch.
FOR FANS OF: Muse, Young Guns.
SAM LAW

LIKE MOTHS TO FLAMES

THE DYING THINGS WE LIVE FOR *(RISE)*

KKK

ANOTHER DECENT SMASH-DOWN ON FOURTH ALBUM FROM OHIO METALCORE CLAN

ALAS, LIKE Moths To Flames have been plagued with accusations – fair ones – of being more genericore than metalcore since their debut. They have clearly made efforts to address this on The Dying Things We Live For. After an opening that sounds like Satan vomiting up last night's Chinese, it's early Bullet For My Valentine metal through and through. Interestingly, they've pushed ahead with A Day To Remember's winning formula (heavy and pop-punk mash-ups) in places. A solid album, but if you weren't a LMTF fan before, you probably won't be now.
DOWNLOAD: Wasted Days.
FOR FANS OF: The Word Alive, Attila.
DAN SLESSOR

DEAD SOUL

THE SHELTERING SKY *(CENTURY MEDIA)*

KKKK

ECLECTIC, BEAUTIFUL AND UTTERLY UNIQUE DEBUT FROM SWEDISH DUO

THE SHELTERING Sky is phenomenal, and almost impossible to surmise in words. It's proggy without replicating any of the genre's clichés. It's catchy as fuck, yet constantly subverts expectations. It's densely layered and *gigantic*, yet subtle and nuanced. And it's both gorgeous and rocks like an absolute beast. The epic, insistent and unpredictable Until The Last Breath is hands down one of the finest songs of 2015, yet the same could almost be said for any other track. The combination of growling guitars, interwoven and intriguing electronics, propulsive rhythms and the melancholic croon of Anders Landelius constantly cohere in a manner that is sublime, making for a record like no other.
DOWNLOAD: Until The Last Breath.
FOR FANS OF: Nine Inch Nails, Khoma.
DAN SLESSOR

your view is of an actual crowd, who give you serious shit when you fuck up. And you can import a shitload of new songs! Thought you were a guitar hero already? You're fuck all 'til you can do this on Expert Mode, pal. For skate fans, **TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 5 (KKKK)** is everything you need to shred, flip and ollie your arse

off from the comfort of your sofa. And, as ever, the punk-tastic soundtrack is frickin' awesome. After all that, you'll want some mechanical violence and robotic brutality. Where to get such things? **TRANSFORMERS DEVASTATION (KKKK)**, of course. Play as the Autobots and kick the living shit out of bad guys for glory. The melee fighting option is about the most fun you can have without putting a metal fist through a building, although it's just as satisfying. Possibly. We've never done it.

WORDS: NICK RUSKELL

Motion City Soundtrack

MY DINOSAUR LIFE

(COLUMBIA, 2010)

HOW MINNEAPOLIS' GEEKIEST POP-PUNKS OVERCAME ADDICTION AND BRANCHED OUT TO SMASH THE BIG TIME

'IT'S BEEN a good year, a good new beginning / I'm through with the old school, so let's commence the winning'. As statements of intent go, the opening lines of Worker Bee – the first track on Motion City Soundtrack's landmark fourth album – don't want for rejuvenated confidence. Musically, they arrived a sharper, better-crafted geek-rock mob than before, but it was Justin Pierre who overcame the biggest hurdles – having battled with drink and drugs, emerging as a different man to the dangerously hard-partying maniac who started the band.

Angst and energy. Dejection and innovation. Mayhem and melody. My Dinosaur Life plays out as an album of invigorating combination and contrast. As fluently versed in the doubts and neuroses of growing up as the language of splatter flicks, classic comics and video-game nostalgia, tracks like Disappear, @!#?@! and brilliantly titled banger The Weakends left these geeks sounding ready to inherit the Earth.

HOW DID IT FEEL GOING INTO THE STUDIO TO MAKE THE ALBUM?

JUSTIN PIERRE (*VOCALS/GUITAR*): "Well, I'd just sort of lost my mind somewhere around then. I'd gotten sober and was trying to get my act together. I gained a lot of weight and, for some reason, I grew a beard. I'd seen Gary Oldman play Sirius Black [in Harry Potter] and I thought, 'I want a beard like that!' It mightn't be the nicest way to put it, but, at the time, someone said, 'We've already got a [Santa-bearded producer] Rick Rubin at the label, we need to get this guy in shape.' So, my worst and best experience was when they hired a personal trainer. She was awesome – but the workouts sucked!"

HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT BEING COUNTED AS PART OF THE EMO SCENE?

"I think we accidentally differentiated ourselves from that scene with the next record we made [2012's Go], but I think the rocky sound – the electric guitars, the feedback, the noise – was a reference to the kind of 1990s sound that blew up in the wake of Nirvana and grunge."

HOW WAS MARK HOPPUS TO WORK WITH AS A PRODUCER?

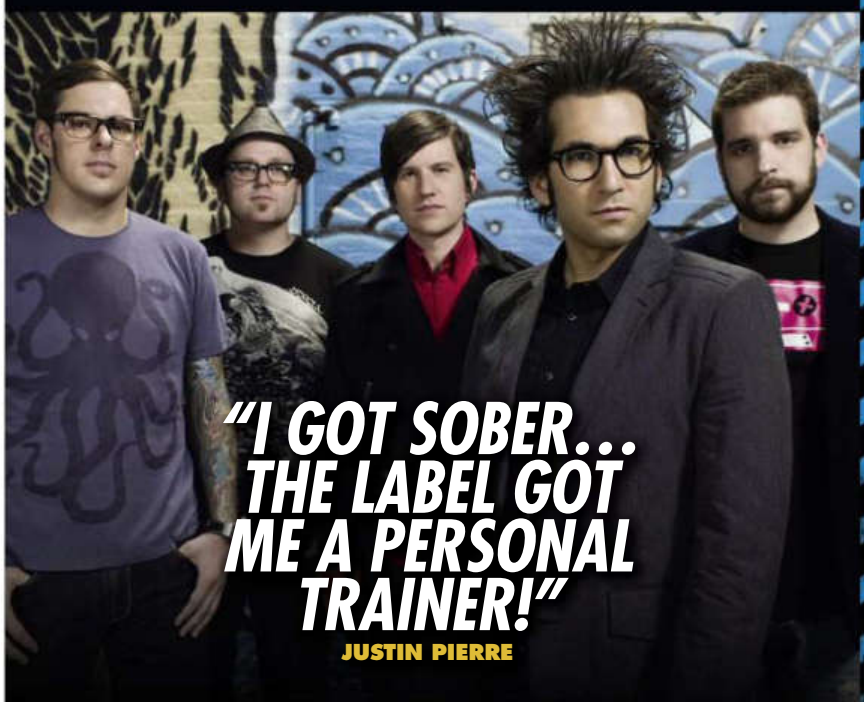
"What Mark is so good at is a lot of the technical stuff I don't know much about. He could tell if one note was slightly off, or one beat was slightly ahead or behind. He's super-smart, and I don't know if people know that about him. He'd mix all these amps and other things and just kinda knew what to mix with what to get a new sound. I don't want to compare him to Steven Spielberg, but it's that kind of thing."

HOW HAS THE RECORD CHANGED YOUR LIFE, LOOKING BACK ON IT?

"The thing that I really got from it was that, before that record, I had a very fixed picture of what Motion City Soundtrack was, and then I found that I could call the shots on this or that idea. I'm not very good at being succinct, but the short answer is that I felt more uninhibited with my own ideas from that point on."

Kerrang! Radio play it all at 10pm, October 22!

WORDS: SAM LAW



"I GOT SOBER... THE LABEL GOT ME A PERSONAL TRAINER!"
JUSTIN PIERRE

K!LOBBER

MU$T HAV£S

ALL THE BEST GEAR FROM THE FOUR CORNERS OF PLANET ROCK AND BEYOND!

So, this is terrifying. The two deadliest things in film-land – robots and dinosaurs – in one terrible, remote-control killing machine. Thanks, whoever invented this. You've doomed us all. Cheers.
£108.95 Red5.co.uk

Mars, untouched by human hand, contains water, which means life. They already love Dave Grohl. You *know* it.
£12.49 Thisispulp.co.uk

Meth-dealers make perfect kid's toys. Sadly, you can't trim his beard and turn him into Ned Flanders.
£17.99 Findmeagift.co.uk

Ever wondered what that cold chill and demonic presence was when you listened to PVRIS? Occult forces. Duh.
£18 Plastichead.com

Want to propose? Can't find the right rock? DING! Eddie jewellery! A 'yes' is (pretty much) guaranteed.
£Various Thegreatfroglondon.com

Aliens built the pyramids. Everyone knows that. But only QOTSA realised they built the disco-balls, too.
£12.49 Thisispulp.co.uk

Game Of Thrones fans – it's the game of Game Of Thrones! It's a game based on Machiavellian cunning, greed, treachery and swearing a lot. And now Monopoly has one for everyone's favourite fantasy show. Although they haven't changed the rules, so you have to get naked, curse too much and moan about winter every turn. Shame.
£29.99 HBOshopEU.com

Revealed: the reason dinos went extinct. Didn't hear the asteroid coming. Silly buggers.
$25 (£16.17) Threadless.com

Gerard goes 3D. It's like he's coming right at you. Especially if someone's coming right at you wearing it.
$19.99 (£12.93) Gerardway.com

H. P. Lovecraft was one of the most terrifying authors in history. And his head came apart easily, it seems.
$30 (£19.41) Threadless.com

Is there anything more beautiful than the croissant moon? No. Nothing more buttery, either.
$25 (£16.17) Threadless.com

This is what Ash Costello's actual skeleton looks like. It's basically an X-ray. But cheaper to do.
£13.50 Plastichead.com

Imagine how high-maintenance a unicorn would be. Huge egos, and they probably do awful shits.
£9.99 Grindstore.com

Listen to the new Lepp album wearing a Lepp hoodie. While stroking a leopard. Mega-fan.
£31 Plastichead.com

Ouija boards are way more effective on a dress. Said no occultist ever. Shows what they know.
£19.99 Thisispulp.co.uk

Billy Corgan: sad on roller coasters, but stick his head on a spike and he smiles. Weirdo.
$25 (£16.17) Weardinner.com

It's a well-established truth that, in their natural habitat, eagles need dance-metal only slightly less than they need sunlight. And even then, they can make do with the chemical corona of a glowstick for three months.
£12.49 Thisispulp.co.uk

One-up that dude who ate corn with his hair in cornrows while listening to Korn. You're Korn cubed, basically.
£13.50 Plastichead.com

Yes, that is Jeff Goldblum. Why? Because Goldblum. What a ridiculous question.
$25 (£16.17) Weardinner.com

BACK TO THE FUTURE

THIS WEEK, WE'RE LIVING IN THE TIME MARTY McFLY GOES TO IN BTTF PART II. NO HOVERBOARDS, BUT ALL THIS…

EXTRA BACK TO THE FUTURE ADVENTURE ALERT! We're not giving any spoilers, but this comic is absolutely awesome. Take it back in time and ruin everything for everyone.
£2.65
Forbiddenplanet.com

It's Michael J. Fox, the fox! But in fox-world, wouldn't he be Michael J. Human? But this presents a problem: foxes can't drive, thus no time travel. The film would've been ***shit***.
$27 (£17.48)
Threadless.com

For a man who cut corners and never used more than 50 per cent of his arse while cleaning cars, Biff's auto business had done really well. Clearly people just like getting mugged-off.
$27 (£17.48)
Threadless.com

In 2015, you can get Lego from every corner toy store. But in 1955, it's not that simple. So, don't swallow any of the bits when you're back there, or you'll be fucked.
£58.18
Ebay.co.uk

We had this Doc-tion figure in our house for *one day* and already he'd wired up a load of weird shit, and we're too scared to turn on the kettle. Don't even *start* with what he did in the loo…
£8.99
Forbiddenplanet.com

We'd love a real hoverboard. Really, really, *really* love one. But nobody's made one. Lazy science bastards. But you can whizz around on this shirt using optical illusions. Maybe.
$27 (£17.48)
Threadless.com

DON'T MISS

FRANK CARTER & THE RATTLESNAKES

THE FRONTMAN IS BACK TO TALK SNAKES AND BREAKING BONES, AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, PLAY SOME SHOWS…

HI, FRANK! DO YOU HAVE ANY BAND RITUALS BEFORE YOU TAKE TO THE STAGE, OR DO YOU EACH DO YOUR OWN THING?

FRANK CARTER (*VOCALS*): "We play a lot of Pro Evolution Soccer! It's about keeping yourself entertained so you don't lose focus. I try to visit a lot of tattoo shops, because I still tattoo, and on this tour coming up I'm going to try to do a few tattoos every day before we play, just to keep myself busy."

VERY NICE! SO, WHY RATTLESNAKES?

"Because all the other animals were taken, pretty much (*laughs*). On a serious note, we were very nearly called Frank Carter & The Rabbits. But I've always had a bit of an affinity with rattlesnakes, they're venomous, deadly, strong and little, like me. It just sounded really good and kind of summed up the sound of the band as well. Frank Carter & The Kittens just didn't have the same ring to it."

HAVE YOU EVER ACTUALLY HANDLED SNAKES YOURSELF?

"Yeah, I have back in the day, though I try and avoid it now. I was on Warped Tour once, and we had just arrived in Scranton, Pennsylvania, at seven in the morning. I went out to go and take a piss, opened the door to this Portakabin and there was a fucking rattlesnake on the floor, curled up in there. So, I just let the door go and wrote with a big marker pen 'Do not open, rattlesnake inside' and went to tell my tour manager."

SNAKES ASIDE, HAVE YOU EVER LANDED YOURSELF IN A&E AFTER A SHOW?

"*Multiple* times. This last tour, I cracked two ribs – I don't know how, but it happened. I've broken my nose multiple times, I've had my head glued back together a couple of times, concussion twice, done loads of stupid shit. Fingers always seem to go, for some reason. When I'm playing, I'll feel an impact but won't feel pain, and I'll think I've got to check that later – and then when I come off stage I normally don't need to check because it'll be like, 'Fuck, yeah, that hurts!' But I don't go to a venue and think in the third song I'm going to jump off this. You just feel the music, it's punk music, you just feel it out, and I get carried away and suddenly I want to dive into the crowd, and sometimes I get hurt. I'd much rather get hurt than hurt other people!"

"I'VE LANDED MYSELF IN A&E MULTIPLE TIMES"
FRANK CARTER

WHAT ELSE IS ON THE HORIZON FOR THE BAND IN THE COMING MONTHS?

"We're going to be shooting a video for the song Trouble, which will be out as a single soon-ish. It's doing really well, actually, people on the radio seem to be getting behind it. They're playing it, which is more than I could ever ask for. I never thought any of the songs on this album would get played on the radio. I'm stoked that any of them are. Then we've got this tour, and a few secrets lined up that I can't really talk about yet, but this year is far from over as far as we're concerned. *And* we just started writing album number two as well. We've got about seven songs down, and we're hoping to have that out pretty much a year to the day from when we released Blossom, so fingers crossed that all comes together."

DATES: Sheffield Leadmill October 21, Newcastle Cluny 22, Glasgow Cathouse 23, Manchester Star & Garter 24 and 26, Norwich Owl Sanctuary 27, Cardiff Clwb Ifor Bach 28. Support: Blackhole, Creeper.

PHOTO: CHRIS CASEY

YOUR WEEK!

KERRANG! DAY OCTOBER 21

ABERDEEN Young Guns (Garage)
BIRMINGHAM Ghost Town (O2 Academy3 Birmingham)
BIRMINGHAM Anti-Flag (Institute)
GLASGOW Cradle Of Filth (Garage)
LIVERPOOL Reel Big Fish, Suburban Legends (O2 Academy Liverpool)
MILTON KEYNES Sylosis, Hang The Bastard (Craufurd Arms)
NEWCASTLE Asking Alexandria, Memphis May Fire, August Burns Red, In Hearts Wake (O2 Academy Newcastle)
SHEFFIELD Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes (Leadmill)
SOUTHAMPTON Bullet For My Valentine, While She Sleeps, coldrain (O2 Guildhall Southampton)
SOUTHAMPTON Crooked Little Sons, Miss Vincent (Joiners)
WOLVERHAMPTON Fightstar, Arcane Roots (Wulfrun Hall)

THURSDAY OCTOBER 22

BRISTOL Delain, Anneke van Giersbergen, The Gentle Storm (Marble Factory)
GLASGOW Ghost Town (Cathouse)
GLASGOW Reel Big Fish, Suburban Legends (Garage)
IPSWICH Bullet For My Valentine, While She Sleeps, coldrain (Regent Corn Exchange)
LINCOLN Asking Alexandria, Memphis May Fire, August Burns Red, In Hearts Wake (Engine Shed)
MANCHESTER Cradle Of Filth (Academy 2)
MANCHESTER Nothing But Thieves (Academy 3)
NEWCASTLE Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes (Cluny)
NORWICH Fightstar, Arcane Roots (Waterfront)
PLYMOUTH Crooked Little Sons, Miss Vincent (Underground)
READING Sylosis, Hang The Bastard (Sub 89)
SHEFFIELD Anti-Flag (Corporation)
WAKEFIELD Young Guns (Warehouse 23)

FRIDAY OCTOBER 23

BIRMINGHAM Delain, Anneke van Giersbergen, The Gentle Storm (Library @ Institute)
BIRMINGHAM Skarlett Riot, The Raven Age (Oobleck)
BOURNEMOUTH Sylosis, Hang The Bastard (Sound Circus)
GLASGOW Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes (Cathouse)
LEEDS Ghost Town (Key Club)
LEEDS Nothing But Thieves (Wardrobe)
LONDON Straight Lines (Boston Music Room)
LONDON Crooked Little Sons, Miss Vincent (Workshop)
LONDON Cradle Of Filth (KOKO, Camden)
MILTON KEYNES The Vintage Caravan (Craufurd Arms)
MILTON KEYNES Young Guns (MK11 Live Music Venue)
NEWCASTLE Reel Big Fish, Suburban Legends (O2 Academy Newcastle)
NEWCASTLE Anti-Flag (Riverside)
SHEFFIELD The Dead XIII (South Sea)
WOLVERHAMPTON Carcass, Obituary, Napalm Death, Voivod, Herod (Wulfrun Hall)

SATURDAY OCTOBER 24

DURHAM Crooked Little Sons, Miss Vincent (Tank)
GLASGOW Carcass, Obituary, Napalm Death, Voivod, Herod (Barrowland)
GLASGOW Anti-Flag (Classic Grand)
GLASGOW Nothing But Thieves (G2)
LANCASTER The Dead XIII (Yorkshire House)
LEEDS Reel Big Fish, Suburban Legends (O2 Academy Leeds)
LEEDS Twin Atlantic, Creeper (Dr Martens @ Brudenell Social Club)
MANCHESTER Delain, Anneke van Giersbergen, The Gentle Storm (Academy 2)
MANCHESTER Fightstar, Arcane Roots (Ritz)
MANCHESTER Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes (Star & Garter)
SWANSEA Skarlett Riot, The Raven Age (Scene)

SUNDAY OCTOBER 25

BELFAST Carcass, Obituary, Napalm Death, Voivod, Herod (Limelight)
BRISTOL Skarlett Riot, The Raven Age (Exchange)
GLASGOW The Vintage Caravan (Audio)
LONDON Delain, Anneke van Giersbergen, The Gentle Storm (O2 Academy Islington)
MANCHESTER Anti-Flag (Sound Control)
MANCHESTER Straight Lines (Sound Control)
NEWCASTLE Fightstar, Arcane Roots (Northumbria Uni)
NOTTINGHAM Reel Big Fish, Suburban Legends (Rescue Rooms)
SOUTHAMPTON Young Guns (Engine Rooms)

MONDAY OCTOBER 26

BIRMINGHAM The Vintage Caravan (Rainbow Cellar)
BRIGHTON Killing Joke (Concorde 2)
BRIGHTON Radkey (Green Door Store)
DUBLIN Carcass, Obituary, Napalm Death, Voivod, Herod (Olympia)
MANCHESTER Reel Big Fish, Suburban Legends (Academy 2)
NEWCASTLE Nothing But Thieves (O2 Academy2 Newcastle)
SOUTHEND Young Guns (Chinnery's)

TUESDAY OCTOBER 27

BRISTOL Carcass, Obituary, Napalm Death, Voivod, Herod (Motion)
EDINBURGH Fightstar, Arcane Roots (Liquid Rooms)
EXETER Killing Joke (Lemon Grove)
GLASGOW Turbowolf (Stereo)
LONDON Our Last Night, Palisades, Crooks (O2 Academy Islington)
LONDON Myrkur (Underworld, Camden)
NORWICH Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes (Owl Sanctuary)
NOTTINGHAM Young Guns (Rescue Rooms)
SHEFFIELD Asking Alexandria, Memphis May Fire, August Burns Red, In Hearts Wake (O2 Academy Sheffield)

RIDER OF THE WEEK

BAND: We Came As Romans
Thought Romans lived off berries and leaves? More like Bud Light and Froot Loops…

WE CAME AS ROMANS

Ice for bus and green rooms
Separate clean ice for drinks
6 stage towels
12 shower towels
3 cases (24-pack) of bottled water
1 case of Bud Light
6 bottles of Vodka
1 case of Pepsi
1 case of Mountain Dew
Veggie tray
Apples
Salsa and chips
2 loaves of bread (one white and one whole wheat)
Assorted sandwich meats
Sliced cheese (provolone, pepper jack)
Mayo & yellow mustard (packets if available)
Coffee (cream & sugar)
Pita chips
Hummus
1 Box of cereal (Frosted Flakes, Froot Loops, Cap'n Crunch)
1 gallon of milk 2 per cent
8 cans of Red Bull
Paper plates
Red SOLO plastic cups
Plastic forks, knives and spoons
Paper towels

CAN'T GET TO A GIG?

THEN HERE'S SOME OTHER STUFF TO KEEP YOUR EYES/EARS BUSY

A DAY TO REMEMBER TRIPLE SHOT

KERRANG! TV – OCTOBER 23, *3:45PM*

Not having a day to remember? Then Kerrang! TV will sort you right out with this triple shot of videos from the Florida pop-punks. Move the sofa aside and brace for impact.

METALLICA: HARVESTER OF SORROW

YOUTUBE

Fancy going backstage with Metallica, but can't be arsed to leave your bedroom? Then load up YouTube and go straight to MetallicaTV for fly-on-the-wall footage of them soundchecking, warming up and playing Monopoly in Quebec City in September. Okay, maybe not that last bit.

JUDAS PRIEST: RISING IN THE EAST

SKY ARTS – ON DEMAND

Back in the early days, Rob Halford used to shoot machine guns onstage. Weirdly, he's not allowed to do that any more (not a clue why), so he just does plenty of extra headbanging to make up for it. For proof, check out this concert at Tokyo's Nippon Budokan back in 2005. Then put a hot-water bottle on your neck.

MY FIRST GIG

WHO: METALLICA, HELSINKI, OULUNKYLÄN URHEILUPUISTO, JUNE 1, 1993

THE CHILDREN OF BODOM KEYBOARDIST DIDN'T JUST GO TO HIS FIRST GIG, HE WORKED AT IT (KINDA)…

JANNE WIRMAN, CHILDREN OF BODOM

"The first big show I ever went to was Metallica in Helsinki in 1993 and I was 14 years old. My dad was a firefighter all of his life and sometimes when big bands came to Finland, if they had pyro, they needed local firefighters to offer their services.

"I got an AAA sticker as I was a 'firefighter', and right before Metallica went on we were both walking onstage, right by the front row checking out the pyro. My friends who had been camping were there in the front row and saw us, they were like, 'What the fuck! You're onstage!' So, my first concert experience was pretty fucking amazing.

"Later on, I went into the Snake Pit and that was also amazing. I was waiting for them to play One, and when they did I was about two metres from the bass drum!

"I met Kirk Hammett after the show and I asked him to sign a shirt I'd made myself in art class. I still have it! I was so young then, I wasn't even dreaming of becoming a rockstar anytime soon, but later on I'm pretty sure it somehow influenced me.

"The one thing I remember about the metal fan community is that I was the shortest kid in there – obviously – and all these Finnish metal dudes were taking care of me. That was awesome.

"What's funny is that the circle is now been closed, because last summer we finally opened up for Metallica!"

GENERAL ADMISSION

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buy your tickets from www.aloud.com

BOOKING NOW

SPOTLIGHT ON...

MANCHESTER

HOME TO CORONATION STREET AND BLACK METAL, BUT NOT ALL AT ONCE...

CHRIS NAUGHTON (VOCALS/GUITAR), WINTERFYLLETH

HEY, CHRIS! WHAT ARE THE KEY VENUES IN MANCHESTER?

"There are loads of venues in **Manchester**! The three **Academies**, **The Star & Garter**, **Dry Bar**, **Night and Day Café**, **Islington Mill**, **The Ritz**, **Gorilla**, **Rebellion Bar** and **The Deaf Institute**, amongst many others. We've played a lot of those venues, and they all have their quirks and charms. One of our fondest memories when we were rising up was playing **The Star & Garter**, with 150-or-so capacity. Or, more recently, playing with **Behemoth** at the main **Academy**, which is a few thousand. Whatever size you are, there's a place for you to play and get yourselves in front of people, and start to plant some roots in this city!"

WHAT'S THE BEST GIG YOU'VE EVER SEEN IN MANCHESTER?

"One of my favourites was when I first saw **My Dying Bride** playing at the **Academy**. The penny dropped for me about how great they were and why I'd not listened to my friend Tom at school who had tried to get me into The Dreadful Hours. I soon rectified that and got into the band in a big way!"

GIGS ASIDE, WHERE SHOULD NEW BANDS HANG OUT?

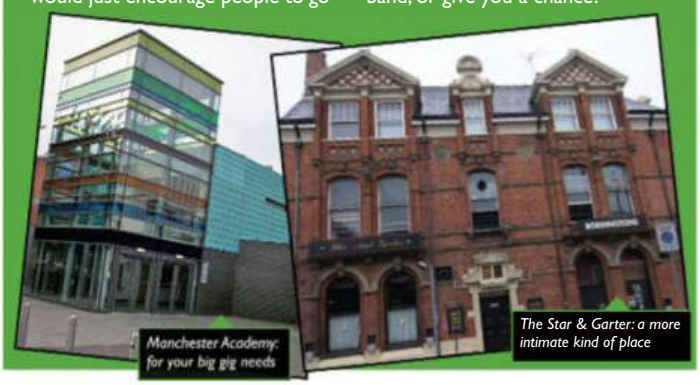
"There are loads of great independent record shops on **Oldham Street**, like **Vinyl Exchange** and **Piccadilly Records**, where you can get access to lots of new and interesting music. But, equally, even some of the bigger chains like **HMV** and **Fopp** have lots more underground releases these days. I would just encourage people to go and buy albums, and to see the value in music again – rather than just downloading individual songs, which seems to be the norm for younger generations. Albums are meant to be heard as albums – particularly in metal and black metal, as people don't really do singles these days. So, I suggest people support the small record shops."

ARE THERE ANY KEY FIGURES IN THE COMMUNITY WHO CAN HELP MAKE OR BREAK BANDS?

"Absolutely. There are a few promoters who do certain kinds of shows in **Manchester**. It's important to know them and support what they're doing, as they'll be able to give your band a platform. People like **Kam Haq** and **Chris Horkan** are doing lots for metal and indie, respectively."

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO BANDS TRYING TO MAKE IT IN MANCHESTER?

"If you want to make it full-stop, then you need to have a member of your band with a sense of business, and a feel for relationship-building and networking. Otherwise, you'll be swallowed up by the abyss, like lots of other great, talented bands who are only great at the music bit. The clue is in the name: music 'business'. My advice would be to have your head screwed on about marketing your band and merchandise, as well as how you present and sell yourselves; not being taken for a ride and not underplaying the value in what you do. If you don't believe in 'you' and present yourselves with confidence, why would anyone have confidence in you or your band, or give you a chance?"



Manchester Academy: for your big gig needs

The Star & Garter: a more intimate kind of place

5 SECONDS OF SUMMER
Sheffield Arena April 5, 2016, London O2 Arena 7 – 8, Leeds First Direct Arena 11, Nottingham Capital FM Arena 12, Birmingham Genting Arena 14, Newcastle Metro Radio Arena 18, Glasgow SSE Hydro 19, Manchester Arena 22, Belfast SSE Arena 25, Dublin 3Arena 26.

ALICE COOPER
Plymouth Pavilions October 29, Swindon Oasis 30. Support: Michael Monroe.

ALIEN ANT FARM
Milton Keynes Crauford Arms January 5, 2016, Birmingham Rainbow Warehouse 6, Glasgow Garage 7, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 8, Liverpool Arts Club 9, Newcastle Riverside 10, York Duchess 12, Norwich Waterfront 13, London Camden Electric Ballroom 14, Manchester Club Academy 15, Sheffield Corporation 16, Cambridge Junction 17, Exeter Lemon Grove 19, Bournemouth Old Firestation 20, Brighton Concorde II 21. Support: InMe, The Dirty Youth.

ALL TIME LOW
Cardiff Arena February 10, 2016, London O2 Arena 11, Manchester Arena 12, Birmingham Barclaycard Arena 13, Glasgow SSE Hydro 15, Dublin 3 Arena 16.

ASKING ALEXANDRIA
O2 Academy Newcastle October 21, Lincoln Engine Shed 22, O2 ABC Glasgow 23, Dundee Fat Sam's 24, Aberdeen Garage 25, O2 Academy Sheffield 27, Manchester Ritz 28. Support: Memphis May Fire, August Burns Red, In Hearts Wake.

BABYMETAL
London SSE Arena Wembley April 2, 2016.

BEARTOOTH
London Camden Electric Ballroom November 24, Bristol Thekla 25, Manchester Academy III 26, Glasgow SWG3 27, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 28.

BIFFY CLYRO
Hogmany @ Edinburgh West Princes Street Gardens December 31.

BLACKBERRY SMOKE
O2 Academy Birmingham November 3, O2 Academy Sheffield 4, O2 Academy Newcastle 5, Manchester Academy 6, London Kentish Town Forum 8.

BLACK STONE CHERRY
Cardiff Motorpoint Arena January 28, 2016, Nottingham Capital FM Arena 29, Liverpool Echo Arena 30, Glasgow SSE Hydro February 1, Birmingham Barclaycard Arena 2, London SSE Arena Wembley 4, Leeds First Direct Arena 4, Manchester Arena 6. Support: Shinedown, Halestorm, Highly Suspect.

BRING ME THE HORIZON
O2 Guildhall Southampton October 31, O2 Academy Glasgow November 24, Edinburgh Corn Exchange 25, Doncaster Dome 26, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 27, London Alexandra Palace 28, O2 Academy Birmingham 29 (matinee), O2 Academy Birmingham 29 (evening), O2 Academy Bristol 30. Support: Neck Deep, PVRIS.

THE BRONX
Manchester Ruby Lounge December 11, London Brooklyn Bowl 13.

BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE
Ipswich Regent Corn Exchange October 22. Support: While She Sleeps, coldrain.

CANCER BATS
Southend Chinnery's January 11, 2016, Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms 12, Brighton Concorde II 13, Norwich Waterfront 14, Exeter Phoenix 15, Plymouth Hub 16, Bristol Marble Factory 17, Bridgend Hobos 18, Reading Sub89 19, Stoke Sugarmill 20, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 21, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 22, Manchester Academy III 23, Leeds Key Club 24, Glasgow Garage 25, O2 Academy2 Newcastle 26, O2 Academy2 Liverpool 27, London Tufnell Park Dome 28.

CHUNK! NO, CAPTAIN CHUNK!
London Camden Underworld December 2, Birmingham Temple @ Institute 3, Nottingham Bodega 4, Leeds Key Club 5, Newcastle Think Tank? 6, Glasgow Cathouse 7, Manchester Sound Control 8, Cardiff Globe 9.

CITY AND COLOUR
Brighton Dome February 18, 2016, Cardiff Great Hall 19, Manchester Albert Hall 20, Belfast Mandela Hall 23, O2 Academy Glasgow 24, London Troxy 26 – 27.

CODE ORANGE
Manchester Gorilla November 2, Dublin Fibber Magees 3, Glasgow Classic Grand 4, London Camden Underworld 5.

COUNTERFEIT
London O2 Academy Islington December 18.

CRADLE OF FILTH
Glasgow Garage October 21, Manchester Academy II 22, London Camden KOKO 23.

THE DARKNESS
Cambridge Corn Exchange December 1, Nottingham Rock City 2, O2 Academy Newcastle 4, O2 Academy Glasgow 5, O2 Academy Leeds 9, Manchester Academy 10, O2 Academy Birmingham 11, O2 Academy Bristol 13, O2 Guildhall Southampton 14, Bexhill De La Warr Pavilion 15, O2 Academy Bournemouth 17, O2 Academy Oxford 19, London Camden Roundhouse 20.

DEAF HAVANA
Leeds Wardrobe November 19, Edinburgh La Belle Angele 20, Dundee Buskers 21, O2 Academy2 Liverpool 22, London Islington Assembly Hall 23. Support: The Xcerts.

DEF LEPPARD / WHITESNAKE
Dublin 3Arena December 6, Belfast Odyssey 7, Newcastle Metro Radio Arena 9, Glasgow SSE Hydro 10, Birmingham Genting Arena 12, Nottingham Capital FM Arena 13, Manchester Arena 15, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 16, London SSE Arena Wembley 18, Sheffield Motorpoint Arena 19. Support: Black Star Riders.

DEFTONES
London SSE Arena Wembley November 21. Support: Architects.

DESERTFEST
Line-up: Electric Wizard, Elder, Conan, Raging Speedhorn, Witchsorrow. London various venues April 29 – May 1, 2016.

DINOSAUR PILE-UP
Birmingham Rainbow November 2, Newcastle Think Tank? 3, Glasgow King Tut's 4, Manchester Ruby Lounge 6, Leeds Key Club 7, Nottingham Bodega 8, Norwich Waterfront 9, London Tufnell Park Dome 11, Bristol Exchange 12, Brighton Bleach 13.

DON BROCO
Cardiff Tramshead December 3, Sheffield Plug 4, Edinburgh Liquid Rooms 6, O2 Academy Leeds 7, Exeter Lemon Grove 8, Nottingham Rock City 9, Manchester Ritz 11, Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall 12, London O2 Academy Brixton 13.

DR. MARTENS STAND FOR SOMETHING TOUR
Leeds Brudenell Social Club October 24: Twin Atlantic, Creeper. Belfast Limelight November 7: Lonely The Brave, Only Rivals. London Camden Black Heart 28: Bury Tomorrow, HECK.

ENTER SHIKARI
O2 Academy Glasgow February 18, 2016, Edinburgh Corn Exchange 19, Nottingham Capital FM Arena 20, Bournemouth BIC 22, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 23, Manchester Victoria Warehouse 25, London Alexandra Palace 27. Support: The Wonder Years.

ESCAPE THE FATE
Manchester Club Academy January 28, 2016, Glasgow Cathouse 29, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 30, London Camden Electric Ballroom February 16.

EVERY TIME I DIE
Southampton Talking Heads November 6, Plymouth Underground 7, Bristol Fleece 8, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 9, Manchester Sound Control 11, Glasgow King Tut's 12, Aberdeen Tunnels 13, Newcastle Riverside 14, Sheffield Corporation 15, Birmingham Asylum 17, London Tufnell Park Dome 18, London Borderline 19, London Camden Underworld 20, London Old Blue Last November 21. Support: Superheaven, Muck.

FIGHTSTAR
Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall October 21, Norwich Waterfront 22, Manchester Ritz 24, Newcastle Northumbria Uni 25, Edinburgh Liquid Rooms 27, Aberdeen Garage 28. Support: Arcane Roots.

FRANK CARTER & THE RATTLESNAKES
Sheffield Leadmill October 21, Newcastle Cluny 22, Glasgow Cathouse 23, Manchester Star & Garter 24, Norwich Owl Sanctuary 27, Cardiff Clwb Ifor Bach 28.

FRANK TURNER & THE SLEEPING SOULS
Llandudno Venue Cymru November 5, O2 Guildhall Southampton 8, Falmouth Princess Pavilion 9, Glasgow Barrowland 13, Newcastle Uni 14, Nottingham Rock City 15, O2 Academy Birmingham 18, O2 Academy Sheffield 19, Bristol Colston Hall 21, Manchester Academy 23, London Alexandra Palace 26.

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND
Cardiff Y Plas April 5 – 6, 2016, Manchester Ritz 8 – 9, Glasgow O2 ABC 10 – 11, Birmingham Institute 13 – 14, London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire 15 – 16.

GHOST
Leeds Beckett University December 12, Nottingham Rock

City 14, Birmingham Institute 15, O2 Academy Newcastle 16, O2 ABC Glasgow 18, Manchester Ritz 19, O2 Academy Bristol 20, London Camden KOKO 21. Support: Dead Soul.

THE GHOST INSIDE
Manchester Club Academy February 11, 2016, O2 Academy Newcastle 12, O2 Academy2 Liverpool 13, O2 Academy2 Oxford 14, Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms 16, Norwich Waterfront 17, Leeds Stylus 18, Glasgow Garage 19, Nottingham Rock City 20, Plymouth Hub 22, Bristol Marble Factory 23, Birmingham Library @ Institute 24, Brighton Concorde II 25, London Camden KOKO 26.

GHOST TOWN
O2 Academy3 Birmingham October 21, Glasgow Cathouse 22, Leeds Key Club 23.

HEAVEN'S BASEMENT
Southampton Engine Rooms December 3. Support: Crobot, Scorpion Child, Buffalo Summer.

HECK
Bristol Exchange October 31, Plymouth Junction November 2, Cardiff Globe 3, Stoke Underground 4, Glasgow Audio 5, Carlisle Brickyard 6, Huddersfield Parish 7, Leeds Key Club 8, Birmingham Cellar 10, St Albans Horn 11, Derby Venue 12, Leicester Soundhouse 13, Burnley Sanctuary Rock Bar 14.

IN THIS MOMENT
London Kentish Town Forum January 21, 2016, Birmingham Institute 22, Glasgow Barrowland 23, Manchester Ritz 24. Support: The Defiled.

JUDAS PRIEST
Bradford George's November 23, Glasgow Barrowlands 24, Wolverhampton Civic Hall 26, Manchester Apollo 28, Portsmouth Guildhall 30, London O2 Academy Brixton December 1.

KERRANG! TOUR 2016
Line-up: Sum 41. Dublin February 10, 2016, Cardiff Great Hall 11, Birmingham Institute 12, Newcastle University 15, Norwich UEA 16, Manchester Albert Hall 18, London Kentish Town Forum 19.

LIFE OF AGONY
London Camden Electric Ballroom March 17, 2016, Wolverhampton Slade Rooms 18, Manchester Club Academy 19.

LONELY THE BRAVE
Glasgow Garage November 9, Manchester Club Academy 10, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 11, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 19, Cardiff Globe 20, Bristol Marble Factory 21, Southampton Talking Heads 23, London Islington Assembly Hall 24, Brighton Haunt 25. Support: Black Peaks.

MARIACHI EL BRONX
Manchester Ruby Lounge December 10, London Brooklyn Bowl 12.

MARILYN MANSON
London Eventim Apollo November 19, Wolverhampton Civic Hall 21, O2 Academy Glasgow 22, O2 Apollo Manchester 23. Support: Krokodil.

MAYBESHEWILL
London Camden KOKO April 15.

MAYDAY PARADE
Exeter Lemon Grove January 26, 2016, O2 Academy Bristol 27, Norwich UEA 28, Birmingham Institute 29, Manchester Ritz 30, O2 Academy Newcastle 31, Dublin Academy February 2, O2 ABC Glasgow, 3, Nottingham Rock City 4, London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire 5, Leeds University 6, Portsmouth Pyramids 7. Support: The Maine, Have Mercy, Beautiful Bodies.

MEGADETH / LAMB OF GOD
Glasgow Braehead Arena November 11, O2 Apollo Manchester 12, London SSE Arena Wembley 14, O2 Academy Birmingham 15. Support: Children Of Bodom, Sylosis.

MOTIONLESS IN WHITE
Belfast Mandela Hall November 23, Dublin Academy 24, Manchester Club Academy 26, Leeds University Union 27, Glasgow Garage 28, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 29, Birmingham Asylum December 1, Bristol Fleece 2, Southampton 1865 3, London Camden Underworld 4 and 6. Support: Chelsea Grin, New Years Day.

MÖTLEY CRÜE
Newcastle Metro Radio Arena November 2, Manchester Arena 3, Birmingham Genting Arena 4, London SSE Arena Wembley 6. Support: Alice Cooper, The One Hundred (except London).

MOTÖRHEAD
Newcastle City Hall January 23, 2016, Glasgow Clyde Auditorium 24, O2 Apollo Manchester 26, Swindon Oasis 27, London Eventim Apollo 29 – 30. Support: Saxon, Girlschool.

MUSE
Birmingham Barclaycard Arena April 2, 2016, London O2 Arena 3, Dublin 3Arena 5, Belfast SSE Arena 6, Manchester Arena 8 – 9, London O2 Arena 11 – 15, Glasgow SSE Hydro 17 – 18.

NECK DEEP / STATE CHAMPS
Birmingham Institute February 1, 2016, O2 Academy Glasgow 2, Manchester Academy 4, Cardiff Great Hall 5, London Kentish Town Forum 6. Support: Creeper, Light Years.

NOTHING MORE
Birmingham Temple December 5, Glasgow King Tut's 6, Manchester Academy III 7, London Boston Music Room 8.

OUR LAST NIGHT
London O2 Academy October 27. Support: Palisades, Crooks.

PAPA ROACH / FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH
London SSE Arena Wembley November 28. Support: Devil You Know, As Lions.

PARKWAY DRIVE
London O2 Academy Brixton February 12, 2016, O2 Apollo Manchester 13, O2 Academy Glasgow 14, O2 Academy Birmingham 15. Support: Bury Tomorrow, Thy Art Is Murder.

THE PRODIGY
Nottingham Capital FM Arena November 24, Newcastle Upon Tyne Metro Radio Arena 26, Manchester Central 27, Sheffield Motorpoint Arena 28, Dublin 3Arena 30, Belfast Odyssey Arena December 1, Birmingham Barclaycard Arena 3, London SSE Arena Wembley 4 – 5. Support: Public Enemy.

QUEEN KWONG
London Camden Barfly December 11, Bristol Louisiana 12, York Duchess 15, Glasgow Stereo 16, Manchester Sound Control 17, Southampton Joiners 18, Brighton Green Door Store 19.

ROLO TOMASSI
Brighton Green Door Store November 6, Plymouth Tiki Bar 7, Bristol Louisiana 8, Manchester Soup Kitchen 9, Glasgow Stereo 10, Nottingham Bodega 11, Norwich Owl Sanctuary 12, London Oslo 13. Support: Employed To Serve, John Coffey.

SKINDRED
O2 Guildhall Southampton November 4, Norwich UEA 5, Nottingham Rock City 6, Manchester Academy 7, O2 Academy Glasgow 10, Leeds Stylus 11, O2 Academy Bristol 12, Birmingham Institute 13, London O2 Academy Brixton 14. Support: Crossfaith, (hed)p.e., Yashin.

SLAVES
London O2 Academy Brixton December 17, Tunbridge Wells Assembly Rooms 18.

SLAYER
Newport Centre November 21, Plymouth Pavilions 22, O2 Apollo Manchester 24, O2 Academy Glasgow 25, O2 Academy Birmingham 27, O2 Academy Leeds 28, London O2 Academy Brixton 30. Support: Anthrax, Kvelertak.

SLEEPING WITH SIRENS
O2 Academy Bristol February 29, 2016, Nottingham Rock City March 1, O2 Academy Glasgow 2, O2 Apollo Manchester 4, O2 Academy Birmingham 5, London Camden Roundhouse 6. Support: This Wild Life, Beach Weather.

SLIPKNOT
Cardiff Arena February 8, 2016, London Alexandra Palace 9, London Alexandra Palace 10, Birmingham Genting Arena 12, Leeds First Direct Arena 13.

THE STORY SO FAR
Cardiff Y Plas December 1, Southampton 1865 2, Exeter Lemon Grove 3, London Camden KOKO 4, Norwich Epic 5, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 7, Birmingham Asylum 8, Manchester Academy II 9, Glasgow Garage 10, Newcastle Riverside 11, Leeds Stylus 12. Support: Turnstile, Drug Church.

STRAY FROM THE PATH
London Camden Underworld November 24, Bristol Exchange 25, Birmingham Asylum 26, Leeds Key Club 27, Newcastle Think Tank? 28, Glasgow G2 29, Manchester Sound Control 30, Nottingham Bodega December 1, Southampton Joiners 2.

THEORY OF A DEADMAN
Newcastle University February 27, O2 ABC Glasgow 28, Leeds Beckett SU 29, London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire March 2, Cardiff Y Plas Students Union 3, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 4, Manchester Ritz 5.

THERAPY?
London Camden Electric Ballroom December 19. Support: Black Spiders.

THUNDER
Nottingham Royal Concert Hall February 15, Bristol Colston Hall 16, Glasgow SECC Clyde Auditorium 18, Sheffield Arena 19, London SSE Arena Wembley 20. Support: Terrorvision, King King.

TREMONTI
Birmingham Institute December 11, Edinburgh Liquid Rooms 12, Manchester Ritz 13, O2 Academy Bristol 15, London Kentish Town Forum 16.

TURBOWOLF
Glasgow Stereo October 27, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 28, London O2 Academy Islington 29, Manchester Academy III 30.

TWENTY ONE PILOTS
O2 ABC Glasgow November 4, Manchester Ritz 5, London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire 6, O2 Academy Oxford 7, Birmingham Institute 9. O2 Academy Leeds February 18, 2016, O2 Academy Newcastle 19, Glasgow Barrowland 20, Manchester Academy 21, O2 Academy Birmingham 23, London O2 Academy Brixton 24 – 25, Nottingham Rock City 27, O2 Academy Bristol 28, Portsmouth Guildhall 29.

WE ARE THE OCEAN
Birmingham Asylum November 9, Cardiff Globe 10, Bristol Fleece 11, Norwich Waterfront Studio 12, Leeds Mine 13, Glasgow King Tut's 15, O2 Academy2 Newcastle 16, Manchester Sound Control 17, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 18, London O2 Academy Islington 20. Support: Tall Ships, Allusondrugs.

WEDNESDAY 13
London Highbury Garage October 30 31.

JUST ANNOUNCED

BASEMENT
Bristol Marble Factory February 7, 2016, Glasgow King Tut's 8, Leeds Stylus 9, Manchester Academy II 10, Norwich Waterfront 11, London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire 12. Support: Tigers Jaw.

BLOODSTOCK
Latest additions: Mastodon, Twisted Sister. Derbyshire Catton Park August 11 – 14, 2016.

DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL
Line-up: Rammstein, Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden. Donington Park June 10 – 12, 2016.

EXODUS
Birmingham Asylum February 25, 2016, Newcastle Riverside 26, Aberdeen Tunnels 27, Glasgow Cathouse 28, Belfast Limelight 29, Dublin Button Factory March 1, O2 Academy Liverpool 2, York Fibbers 3, Notingham Rescue Rooms 4, London Camden Underworld 5, Brighton Haunt 6, Southampton Talking Heads 8, Bristol Fleece 9, Plymouth Hub 10, Cardiff Globe 11.

SKUNK ANANSIE
Manchester Albert Hall February 4, 2016, London Forum 5.

THEORY OF A DEADMAN
Date added: Norwich Waterfront March 6, 2016.

STEVEN WILSON
Brighton Dome January 25, 2016, Bristol Colston Hall 26, London Eventim Apollo 27, O2 Apollo Manchester 29, Newcastle City Hall 30.

THE STRUTS
London 100 Club November 19.

MACHINE HEAD

Norwich Open March 2, 2016, Nottingham Rock City 3, Belfast Limelight 5, Dublin Olympia 6, Manchester Academy 8, Cardiff Great Hall 10, London Eventim Apollo 11, O2 Academy Glasgow 12.

PHOTO: PAUL HARRIES

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THE SMALL PRINT!

Kerrang! Radio will also still be on DAB digital radio in London, but you might need to retune to find us. For more information on retuning and other ways to listen, just head to Kerrangradio.co.uk. We appreciate many of you may have questions or concerns about how you can still listen to your favourite radio station, and if you're still unsure of anything, you can always reach us by sending an email to kerrangqueries@bauermedia.co.uk.

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ON SALE OCTOBER 28

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BAUER

recycle

THE ULTIMATE
ROCKSTAR TEST

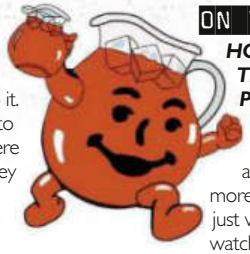
CODY CARSON
SET IT OFF

WHEN HE'S NOT DOING JAZZ HANDS, THE FRONTMAN IS GOING TO REALLY WEIRD PARTIES…

ON ROCK'N'ROLL...

WHAT'S THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS THING ANYONE IN YOUR BAND HAS DONE?

"We were at a show in South Florida and a guy was like, 'I'll give you a tattoo, but I get to choose it,' and Dan [Clermont, guitar] got a tattoo of the Kool-Aid Man! Would I have done it? I don't have any tattoos, so I don't think I'd be able to do it. Dan and Maxx [Danziger, drums] used to do this thing they called 'Yes Nights' where they'd all hang out and if anyone said, 'Hey you wanna do this?' they just had to say yes. And one night they were like, 'Let's get Pokémon tattoos!' They all went to a tattoo shop and Dan got Meowth on his leg and Maxx got Haunter (*laughs*)!"



WHAT'S THE DRUNKEST YOU'VE EVER BEEN?

"There's a venue near home [in Florida] called The Orpheum, and every Saturday they have an event called 'Sink or Swim', and it's $12 all-you-can-drink! Which is *dangerous*! I'm terrified of snakes, and one time I went there I woke up tagged in a picture on Facebook holding a python! [After this particular night] when they got me back to [where we were staying], I wasn't speaking English. I got out of the van and then I peed on our van! As they were walking me back into the apartment complex, there were dogs barking, and I just started barking back at them. Then we went back to the room and I woke up naked on the couch, with Dan right in front of me playing South Park on N64."

WHAT'S THE CRAZIEST PARTY YOU'VE BEEN TO?

"We went to a party and the woman's mom was there, which wasn't a big deal. But what was weird as fuck was she was dressed all in gothic clothing, and she was over 40, and had all friends that were over 40, also in gothic clothing. It looked like teachers decided to all go gothic and have a meeting about it… If that wasn't creepy enough, there was fake blood everywhere. Then I opened the fridge to grab a beer and there was one of those heads that people practice hair-cutting on in the fridge, covered in blood, just staring at me. So, I drank in a corner with everyone else, away from those people."

You've never covered everything in blood when you practice your hair-cutting? Just us, then…

ON YOUR OWN MUSIC...

HOW MANY CHANCES DID YOU GIVE THE GIRL IN YOUR SONG PLASTIC PROMISES TO CHANGE?

"Four times! She was not pleased that song was written about her (*laughs*)! At all. She didn't really say anything, she was more passive-aggressive about it. She would just walk out of the room if she was ever watching me play and that song came on."

*Correct! Unlike her behaviour *does super-loud tut**

WHAT COLOUR TOP ARE YOU WEARING AT THE START OF THE ANCIENT HISTORY VIDEO?

"It's a blue and white shirt. It was bought for me as a birthday gift from our manager, Sherry, because we wanted to work on the colour scheme of the whole thing. She was adamant that I wear that in the opening scene, so I did (*laughs*)!"

One point in the bag! Much like that shirt when Sherry bought it

WHAT IS THE PENULTIMATE TRACK ON THE ALBUM HORRIBLE KIDS?

"I would say it's Missing You! I always put the ballads last on our albums."

Correct! Are you on the payroll at Kleenex?

ON THE HYPOTHETICAL...

YOU HAVE TO HAVE YOUR EYEBROWS PERMANENTLY LASERED OFF OR LOSE YOUR SINGING VOICE FOR A YEAR – WHICH DO YOU CHOOSE?

"Eyebrows off! I will start drawing that shit on – I'm not losing my voice (*laughs*). That's a year of no productivity. I'd draw them on with a crayon (*laughs*). I'd have to do some research – whatever Chris from Motionless In White uses."

YOUR GUITARIST DAN TELLS YOU HE'S TAKEN UP WORK AS A MALE STRIPPER, BUT CAN FIT IT IN AROUND THE BAND'S SCHEDULE. DO YOU LET HIM STAY?

"Absolutely! He can do it onstage (*laughs*). That's amazing! We'd have a separate tent on Warped Tour just for Dan to strip. He's not done it before, but I feel like he would kill it (*laughs*). In between every song he'd have to remove one article of clothing, and we'll have a Duality diamond on his thong…"

FALL OUT BOY THREATEN TO SUE YOU OVER YOUR NAME – WHAT DO YOU CHANGE IT TO?

"I think we would change our band name to Fall Out Boy's Become Way Too Sensitive (*laughs*)! And we would trademark it and everything… we'd just turn it into an acronym – FOBBWTS, so however that's pronounced. I think it would be a good retort."

Reckon you might be safe to get the Twitter handle for that one…

SPIRITUAL HEADMELTER...

WHAT'S WAITING FOR US ON EARTH 2.0?

"I think there's gonna be life on there! Would I go on the first voyage? Oh, god no! I don't even like to be the first person with the new iPhone… I like to let other people get it, tell me how it is and then I'll get it (*laughs*)!"

You'll be worried about more than the latest iPhone when the aliens try and turn you into a burger

THE VERDICT — GOOD EFFORT, CODY, BUT NOT ENOUGH BARKING AT DOGS TO GET YOU IN THE TOP NINE

SCORE 72%

THE LEADERBOARD

1	LEMMY MOTÖRHEAD	99%
1	OZZY OSBOURNE BLACK SABBATH	99%
1	ROB HALFORD JUDAS PRIEST	99%
4	MATT SKIBA ALKALINE TRIO	98%
5	ICE-T BODY COUNT	97%
6	MATT SORUM	97%
7	GENE SIMMONS KISS	96%
8	ALICE COOPER	95%
9	SHIFTY SHELLSHOCK CRAZY TOWN	95%
10	CODY CARSON SET IT OFF	72%
81	CHARLIE SIMPSON FIGHTSTAR	65%
82	BOB MOULD HÜSKER DÜ/SUGAR	64%
83	AUSTIN CARLILE OF MICE & MEN	61%

WORDS: JENNYFER J. WALKER

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